Routes to tour in Germany

The Swabian Alb Route

Aalen
Nördlingen
Heidenheim
Geislingen
Urach
Tailfingen
Ebingen
Trossingen
Tuttlingen

German roads will get you there. South of Stuttgart the Swabian Alb runs north-east from the Black Forest. It is a range of hills full of fossilised reminders of prehistory. It has a blustery but healthy climate, so have good walking shoes with you and scale a few heights as you try out some of the 6,250 miles of marked paths. Dense forests, caves full of stalactites and stalagmites, ruined castles and rocks that invite you to clamber will ensure variety.

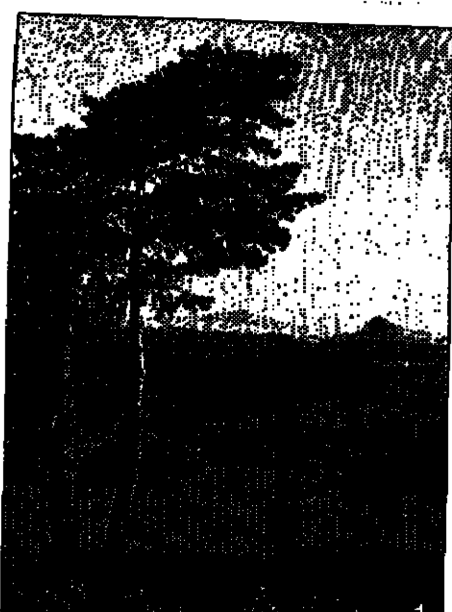
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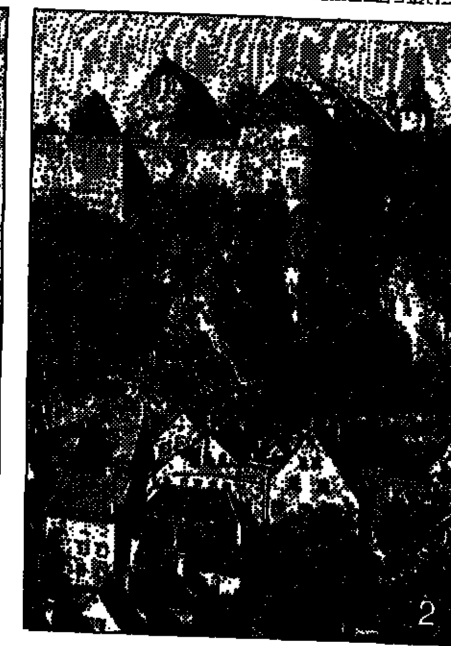
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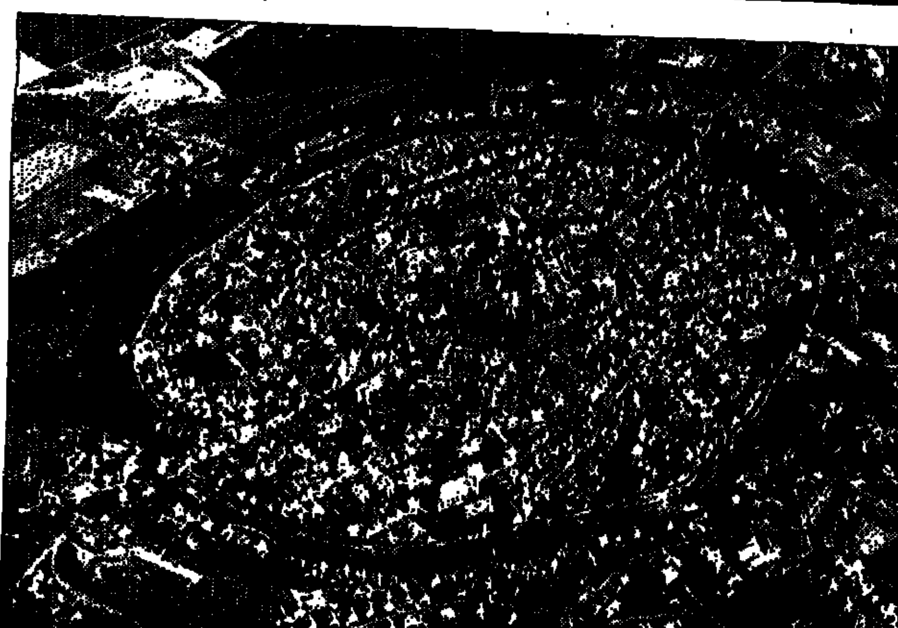


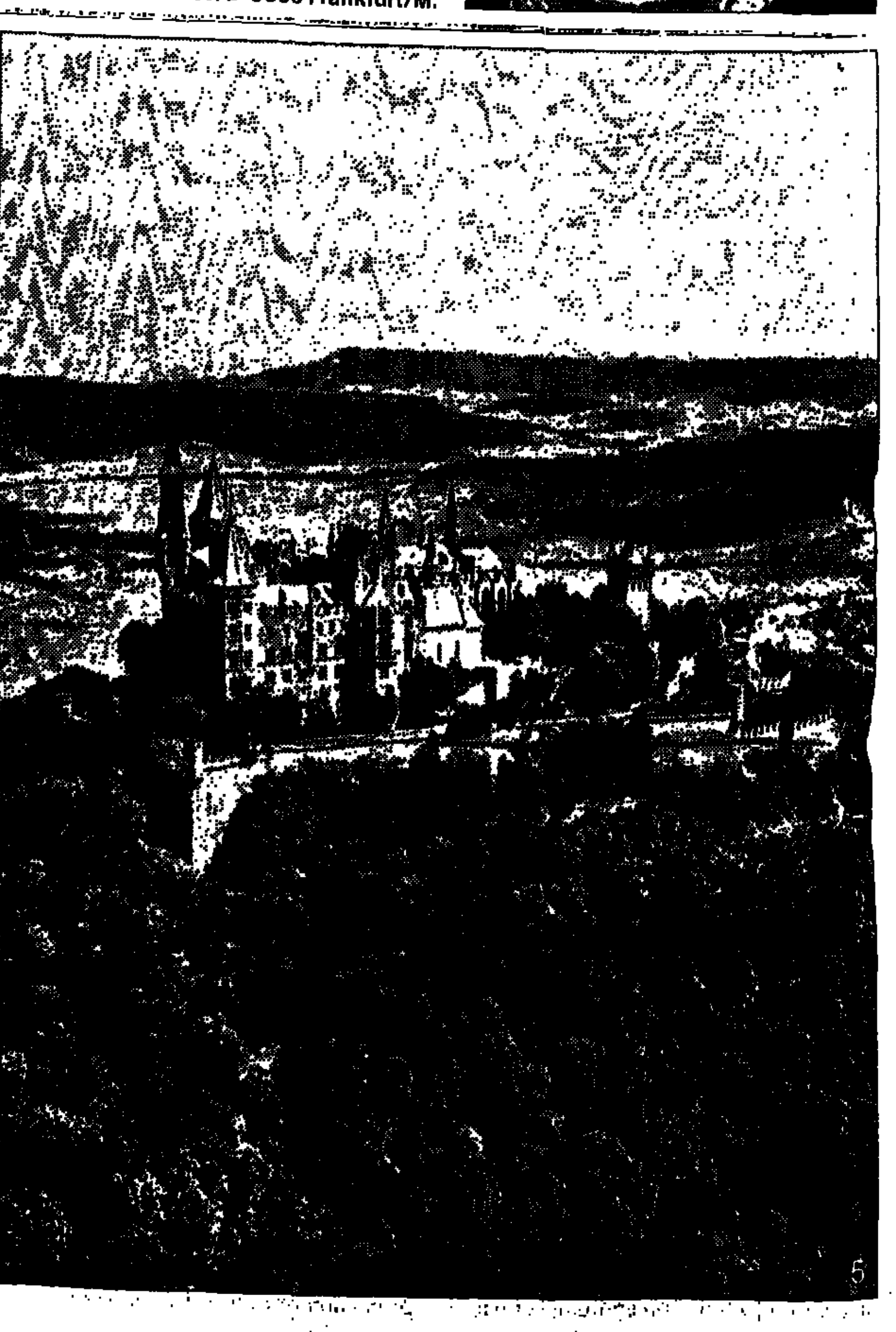
1 View of the Hegau region, near Tuttlingen
2 Heidenheim
3 Nördlingen
4 Urach
5 Hohenzollern Castle











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European summit dominated by the German issue

At its summit in Strasbourg, European Community leaders: recognised for the first time the right of Germans to "unity through free self-determination"; took a decisive step towards economic and monetary union by fixing a date for a meeting designed to amend European Community treaties; and adopted resolutions supporting reforms in Eastern Europe, including one relating to the establishment of a development bank.

Never before has there been so much talk about Germany at a European Community summit as there was in Strasbourg.

And never before were have the obstacles even friendly neighbours place in the way of a striving for German unity — should this become manifest in the two German states — been so clearly defined.

The twelve European Community leaders outlined how they intend encouraging the process of reform through cooperation in the hitherto Communist states of Central and Eastern Europe.

None of the summit documents, however, show a trace of a possible "interbloc" enlargement of the European Community.

The greater the degree to which the revolution in the GDR makes nothing seem impossible the more Bonn's Western European partners cling to the pillars of the existing status quo — Nato, the Warsaw Pact and, above all, the European Community with its current composition.

The most obvious demonstration of this fact is the resolution virtually wrested by President Mitterrand of France, Giulio Andreotti of Italy and others to already decide now that a treaty for a monetary union in the Community should be negotiated at the end of next year.

This must necessarily include the first elements of a political union.

Bonn Chancellor Helmut Kohl gave way to insistence on this point just before the Strasbourg meeting.

As a kind of service in return Kohl and Bonn Foreign Minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, wanted to include a straightforward sentence on the right of self-determination of the German people within the framework of a European peace order in a Declaration by the twelve Community leaders.

This sentence had already been accepted without hesitation by the other Community partners (except Ireland) at the Nato summit in May.

At that time, admittedly, no-one foresaw the upheavals in the GDR.



The two summiteers. Chancellor Kohl (left) and President Mitterrand during the European summit in Strasbourg. (Photo: dpa)

Now the other partners were not even content with the additional reference to the CSCE Final Act, which allows border changes through peaceful agreement.

Possible German unity is now *de facto* made dependent on the approval of all powers concerned and even on an integration of the GDR into the European Community, thus becoming utopian regardless of the right of self-determination.

The Bonn leadership will require the utmost skill if it intends moving closer towards unity.

Kohl's refusal to make a clear statement waiving all territorial claims during his visit to Poland and his undiplomatically announced ten-point plan contributed substantially towards stirring up the fears of partners.

This found its expression in the Strasbourg declaration.

The Chancellor's complaint that some people mean the unalterability of the inner-German border when they talk about the Oder-Neisse border is quite correct. But he provided the pretext himself. It is completely unclear which course the future development will take.

The safeguards laid down by European Community partners in Strasbourg do not stand in the way of the "contractual Community" between the two German states envisaged by Hans Modrow.

Even the setting up of joint institutions by Bonn and East Berlin remain possible, providing this does not question essential elements of state sovereignty.

One thing, however, is clear: the word "reunification" should disappear from the vocabulary of West German politicians if they intend furthering the cause.

The less conspicuously the new German-German rapprochement takes place the better its chances of success.

Mitterrand described the outcome of the European Community summit as a sign that "the two parts of Europe" have moved out of the shadow of their superpowers.

In its declaration on Eastern Europe the Twelve referred to the Community as a "cornerstone of a new European architecture" and as the pole of a future balance of power in Europe.

This above all fits in with the French aim of turning the European Community into a buttress of the eastern superpower, the Soviet Union.

The fact that the Federal Republic of Germany is firmly anchored in the moorings of the western community and its intensification should also prevent the two German states, with their population of 78 million people, from becoming a new hegemonic power in Central Europe.

Erich Hauser
(Frankfurter Rundschau, 11 December 1989)



Four-power meeting in Berlin

The four ambassadors of the occupying powers in Berlin after the first four-power conference for 18 years. From left, they are Vernon A. Walters (USA), Sir Christopher Mallaby (Britain), Vyatcheslav Kotschemassov (Soviet Union) and Serge Boidevaix (France). The meeting was held because the four powers are worried that their rights are being skirted by the Germans. (Photo: dpa)

IN THIS ISSUE

INTERNATIONAL

The summit: a sensation amid the useful embellishments

A meagre outcome? A sensational outcome! Admittedly, during their eight-hour talks at the Malta summit George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachov did not effect any further reductions of nuclear weapons or pacify conflict regions. In comparison with former summit meetings the result was poor.

Yet these were not the main topics on the summit agenda, which addressed the substance of East-West politics, not the symptoms such as arms and disarmament.

Talks centred on the desired change and the necessary stability in Central Europe.

The two superpowers had not discussed Europe since the mid-1950s; the subject had been frozen solid by the Cold War.

Instead, Europe grew accustomed to its division and the world grew accustomed to deterrence.

Detente was an attempt to find a modus vivendi, to make the situation tolerable. Arms control was its most visible symbol and its primary instrument.

As the rivalry could not be overcome it had to be regulated in such a way that the risk of war could be reduced to a minimum.

Previous superpower summits had one paramount objective: to maintain the status quo. The meeting in Malta, on the other hand, had a different, a new task: to steer the course of change.

This, however, cannot be brought about by a few disarmament initiatives or a few agreements. And it cannot be perpetuated in a *communiqué*.

It demands the much more difficult task of coordinating the assessment of political processes and their momentum. The fact that Bush and Gorbachov managed to do this successfully in Malta is the real sensation of the windswept meeting. The rest was useful embellishment.

The US and Soviet leaders agreed to try and fit the change in the heart of Europe, a change which neither party wants to or can influence, into a framework of stability.

This is to be achieved by the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the virtually standing round of discussions and negotiations in which almost all European states and the Soviet Union, Canada and the United States are involved.

These states agreed in the Helsinki final accords in 1975 to intensify cooperation on the basis of existing borders.

At that time Helsinki primarily had the function of building a bridge between the eastern and western camps. It was intended as a means of institutionalising detente and thus preventing crises.

Today the Helsinki process has a supportive function. It's main task is to channel change and thus help prevent crises, especially those which could result from a joining together of the two Germanies at too heady a pace.

Summarising the talks in Malta Gorbachov said: "We are both convinced of the extreme importance of the CSCE process." The Soviet leader said that this process had focused on the consequences of the second world war and consolidated its outcome. "These are the realities. And today's reality is a Europe with two German states." This stance was seconded by Bush, who went even further than the Helsinki concept of "inviolable" borders: "Helsinki contains the concept of permanent borders."

The United States is lending Gorbachov such support in its own interests.

Goerge Bush is well aware of the fact that the success of reformers in Moscow is a precondition for a more peaceful world.

For a long time the Bush Administration did not really know how to respond to developments in the Soviet Union. In the meantime, however, it has decided to unequivocally back Gorbachov.

With the help of the planned economic agreement Bush hopes to "create a climate in which American business can support chairman Gorbachov's reforms."

By openly declaring his willingness to cut back the Amercian defence budget and withdraw a considerable number of American troops from Europe Bush gives the Moscow reformers backing for further reductions of the Soviet military budget — in favour of the ailing Soviet economy.

By agreeing to help stabilise developments in central Europe Bush acknowledges Gorbachov's willingness to allow the former vassals of the Soviet empire to attain their political majority.

A tacit stability pact was agreed on between the superpowers in Malta, therefore, triggered by the European, events in Europe, above all in Germany.

The wheel thus turns full circle: the German war once turned the world powers into allies. The Soviet desire to solve the German Question by forcibly dividing Europe turned them into rivals.

Now that Gorbachov no longer has any interest in perpetuating the division of Europe they become allies in prudence. This is indeed a sensation — even at a time when sensations abound.

Christoph Bertram

(Die Zeit, Hamburg, 8 December 1989)

Genscher gives Gorbachov some assurances

The headlines are dealing with the giddy pace of reform in the GDR, the decline of the ruling SED, and the first concrete arrangements between Bonn and East Berlin on the setting up of a joint foreign exchange fund to finance trips to the West by GDR citizens.

The Bonn government views these arrangements as steps towards "confederative structures" between German states, along the lines presented by Chancellor Helmut Kohl in his ten-point programme mapping out the stages along the road to the unity of the German nation.

The resignation by Egon Krenz as chairman of the GDR Council of State is the next step in the breathtaking development in the GDR which will have noticeable repercussions on relations between the two German states.

The development is moving at such a pace that it again involves risks to Europe's political stability. This is not just pessimism but a description of reality.

During his two-day visit to Moscow Bonn Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher was made aware of this fact.

On the one hand, Mikhail Gorbachov with his reform policy is the pacemaker of developments in Poland, Hungary, the GDR, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria.

The power of reforms in the states of the former Eastern Bloc, which has developed in a surging wave, now threatens to create considerable difficulties for its real mastermind in the Kremlin.

The failure of economic reform and the catastrophic supply bottlenecks in the huge empire of the Soviet Union is undermining Gorbachov's position from within.

The reformist and liberation movements in former satellite states can no longer be controlled by Moscow and produce unpredictable foreign policy risks which could question Gorbachov's position of leadership.

If the spirit of these liberation movements spreads to the Soviet Union this could lead to a development which no-one interested in a new political order in Europe and thus in East-West relations can desire.

The marshals in the Soviet Union are restless. One of them would take over from Gorbachov if he were ousted from power.

Gorbachov is aware of this fact and makes no secret about his fears.

During his visit to Moscow Hans-Dietrich Genscher took the opportunity to assure the current Soviet leadership that neither Bonn nor its western allies have any intention of capitalising on the difficulties and problems which inevitably accompany a policy of reform. Genscher's

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German Question dominates the Nato show

"Who was most opposed to German reunification?" This was the question most journalists wanted answered in the press centre following the Nato summit meeting in Brussels.

President Bush originally came to Brussels just to brief his alliance colleagues on the stormy Maltese summit meeting with Soviet leader Gorbachov and attune them to Washington's new line.

His main message was that the head of the Kremlin genuinely wants freedom in Eastern Europe, but that he needs aid to ensure perestroika's survival.

Accelerated disarmament negotiations would be a help as would the continued existence of Nato with American military presence in Europe — as a guarantee that the Warsaw Pact does not break up.

Although the eastern superpower cannot beg for the third means of support, economic assistance, it is urgently needed.

Bush's intention of gaining flank support from the European Community partners in this respect for his fight against anti-Communist hardliners in Washington was by and large drowned in the turmoil of the discussion which ensured in Brussels.

It was the German Question which stole the show, or at least surfaced repeatedly.

As second speaker Italy's Giulio Andreotti took up a comment made in passing by President Bush. He remarked that during his flying visit to Rome on his way to Malta Bush had already told him that "Gorbachov is seriously concerned about the rapid developments in the GDR."

He must have then dished out sideswipes against those who, without consideration and coordination with their allies, seek to encourage such developments.

This was an obvious reference to Bonn Chancellor Helmut Kohl's ten-point plan for German-German *rapprochement*. Bonn's uninitiated Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher was obliged to rush from Brussels to Moscow as a kind of fireman to provide a subsequent interpretation of Helmut Kohl's proposals.

Canada's Brian Mulroney confirmed that Gorbachov had also expressed his concern about Germany during the former's visit to Moscow the previous week.

French President Francois Mitterrand, who not only conspicuously cancelled a joint breakfast planned with Kohl but delayed the start of consultations by landing late, then philosophised about the "inviolability of borders in Europe" specified in the final CSCE accords agreed on in Helsinki in 1975.

He did, however, add that the right of peoples to self-determination takes priority.

Mitterrand stressed that the Germans cannot be denied this right, insofar as democratic votes are held on this point some day in the Federal Republic of Germany and the GDR. He added that this is not the only precondition.

Those at the conference who felt that they had interpreted Mitterrand's remarks correctly take this to mean that Mitterrand would like the 35 CSCE signatory states to have a say in any possible unification of the two German states.

Following this digression Chancellor Kohl elucidated his ten-point plan. He emphasised that he deliberately refrained from fixing any schedule for a German confederation or federation.

He insisted that he was fostering the process of European unification because he realised that the German Question can only be resolved under a European roof.

His interpretation of the CSCE final accords is such that peaceful alterations of borders are possible.

Trying hard to move away from the German issue Kohl pointed to the "hard winter" which lies ahead for Poland and Hungary, not forgetting to refer to the aid provided by Bonn.

The Federal Republic of Germany, he said, gives just as much assistance to Poland as the United States ($250m). The other western partners should now do more to help provide the second half of the targeted figure of $1bn.

Britain's Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher tried to steer the discussion back to Bush's main point: "How can we help Gorbachov?"

The Iron Lady, however, simply listed her misgivings: democracy and the market economy are completely unknown in the Soviet Union; the expectations of the East are much greater than the possibilities of the West; and there is the question of whether Moscow can scrap its 70,000 tanks and destroy its chemical weapons without damaging the environment.

It is important, therefore, Mrs Thatcher pointed out in reference to previous statements by Giulio Andreotti and Helmut Kohl, "not to jeopardise Nato." The preservation of the two military pacts is im-

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GERMANY

Party gets new leader and is to be renamed

A 41-year-old lawyer, Gregor Gysi, has been chosen as the new head of the Socialist Unity Party to replace Egon Krenz. The party's name is also to be changed. Gysi says changes are to be more than cosmetic. "We want a new party."

The people of East Germany are relentlessly pushing ahead with reforms and dismantling the power of the ruling party, the SED.

Egon Krenz was party leader and head of state for only six weeks. In the end even members demanded his resignation.

Now the entire Central Committee and the new Politburo have stepped down in the realisation that they have failed.

Under Erich Honecker's leadership the Communists took the GDR to the brink of ruin while they themselves enjoyed life to the full like hedonistic renaissance rulers.

As others stood in queues in the hope of being able to buy enough food to satisfy basic needs, party leadership lived like lords.

It was the kind of lifestyle one might have expected from Philippine dictators or in Central American banana republics — but surely not in the "first workers" and peasants' state" on German soil!

Erich Honecker let himself be extolled as an anti-fascist fighter and an apostle of peace. In reality, he exploited his people and made sure that the leadership caste received more and more privileges.

Krenz was always his obedient disciple. So he went as fast as he came. Party expulsions, resignations and arrests are the inevitable consequences.

Embitterment is growing as winter approaches and clouds of brown coal dust settle on the decaying towns and cities and make it difficult to breathe.

Many East Germans now realise their hard-earned savings are worth nothing. There are premonitions of a general strike.

Once again this has been forestalled by the (self-)purification campaign of the SED. Yet even new guiltless figures at the head of the party will be unable to guarantee its survival.

The SED was created to safeguard Soviet hegemony in the GDR. Does the existence of the party now make sense? The SED is disintegrating. A feeling of helplessness is spreading.

The former parties of the so-called anti-fascist bloc are too embroiled in the soiled past to be able to assume a decisive role during a transition from a period of Stalinist rule to democracy.

The new Opposition groups, however, are still at odds with one another over objectives. They lack a sound organisational structure.

Most people in the GDR know that socialism is on its last legs. Yet most Opposition groups do not want to drop the idea of a "democratic socialism."

Even in Prague, where the political about-turn came after East Berlin's, market economy ideas are being more openly discussed. In the GDR, however, a lot of people still seem to seek their salvation in nebulous dreams. This results in a power vacuum. The new government led by Hans Modrow is the last functioning body left. This may give it power, but even if Modrow is a genuinely honest comrade he is also stigmatised by the fact that he is a member of the exploitative SED.

How will East Germans channel their growing anger? Will there be a demand for speedy reunification as the only way out of the inconsolability of life in the GDR?

Although things seem to be developing fast the new government is working far too slowly. It is hardly surprising that Modrow welcomed parts of Chancellor Kohl's ten-point.

Only joint commissions and permanent consultative mechanisms can create the basis for close cooperation with the Federal Republic of Germany.

GDR changes are still not radical enough. Hesitation and helplessness over the future structure of the economy could lead to a collapse of public life. Who will be interested in working if there is no personal or national perspective?

The Federal Republic of Germany will have to face up to huge problems.

As Hans-Dietrich Genscher quite rightly pointed out all West Germans will be put to the test to see whether words of German unity will be followed by acts of national solidarity.

The parties, however, are not preparing the population for the fact that this solidarity will be expensive.

Instead, they are all jostling to get in the best starting position for next year's general election.

This applies to both Helmut Kohl in the form of his embarrassing go-it-alone, which has not only confused the FDP but also the Four Powers and Poland, as well as Saarland Premier Oskar Lafontaine (SPD) with his rabble-rousing slogans.

The two big people's parties, the CDU and the SPD, do not give the impression that they are doing justice to the responsibility the Federal Republic of Germany now has to bear.

As the GDR has become unpredictable and this state of affairs will continue for some time Bonn must do even more to prove its worth as a guarantor of stability in Central Europe.

Adrian Zielcke

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 4 December 1989)

Mob-law mood on the streets as the scandals get deeper

The fact that the political revolution in the GDR is taking place so peacefully verges on a miracle.

"Kick the Reds out of the demo" was a much-cheered chant during the regular Monday demonstration in Leipzig on 4 December.

Although there was no violence during the occupation of the state security service (Stasi) building in Leipzig tear gas grenades were initially used during a similar attempt in Suhl.

Cries of "Stasi, give us the files" and "Corrupt robbers behind bars!" are regularly heard.

Theree is an atmosphere of rumours, honest anger and signs of a desire to apply lynch-law.

Embitterment about the high-handedness of the Communist Party, the new corruption and moneymaking cases exposed every day and the underhand practices of an omnipotent state security apparatus mingle with a thirst for revenge.

As power is on the streets the people have taken it into their own hands.

Editorial and people's police offices are being inundated with phonecalls calling for an inspection of areas with fenced-in state villas or claiming that some official department somewhere is burning documents or that the shredder is working overtime.

Both the journalists and the criminologists complain that there are simply not enough people to investigate all the reports.

The little Honeckers, Mittags and Schalck-Golodkowskis are the main butts of the anger of the people, which is becoming increasingly difficult to restrain.

There were tumultuous scenes after an announcement during a citizens' meeting in Berlin-Friedrichshain that the mayor of this district, Heinz Borbach, had given instructions to destroy documents in his office.

The enraged crowd marched over to the office and forced entry into the building.

The rumours turned out to be false and Borbach spoke of a "political character assassination."

In the district of Berlin-Schönefeld newspaper editors arrived at the state security building only to find "deserted rooms". There are rumours that the Stasi has transported documents to Romania.

The more ridiculous the rumour the more likely it is to be believed in a society which has suffered too long under the despotic rule of a single party.

Everyone in Leipzig believed the speaker who, a few weeks ago, said during a demonstration that Egon Krenz had had an operation in the USA which cost half a million dollars. People almost took offence when he later withdrew his claim.

The vigilant people's wrath, however, is not only based on unfounded rumours.

It was discovered, for example, that there were plans to remove electronic devices imported from the USA from a garage used by former GDR Prime Minister Willi Stoph.

The police are carrying out investigations against sports officials whose drawers were found to contain DM200,000, against members of staff at the IFA motor combine on grounds of racketeering and officials in the construction business accused of misappropriating material.

The entire GDR is immersed in investigation fever.

Several commissions have been set up to look into the racketeering and corruption charges. Their powers, however, are vague and the public prosecutors are already overworked or even unwilling to dig deep enough into the morass of collapsed SED rule.

The People's Chamber has appointed an investigation committee, the SED Working Committee led by lawyer Gregor Gysi has formed a "Corruption Investigation Committee" and the civil rights' movement has set up a third investigation committee together with Hans Modrow's government.

The clearing-up operations and the ne-

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portant for disarmament. No-one knows, said Prime Minister Thatcher, when German reunification will come.

Furthermore, democracy in the Eastern European states must "prove their worth for ten to 15 years" before considering a restructuring of Europe.

The other government leaders, however, especially those of the Benelux countries and Denmark, again broached the subject of Germany.

Diplomats agreed that there is no escaping the fact that all peoples have a right to self-determination.

Yet everyone agreed that German-German *rapprochement* must take place "embedded in European structures." It was not clear which structures were meant.

"There was almost an impression," said one observer, "that the majority feels that Nato and the Warsaw Pact need no longer continue to exist because of East-West confrontation, but because of the Germans."

Admittedly, Mitterrand was not the only politician who referred to the Helsinki agreements.

It was not the familiar caution of the US President alone, therefore, which prompted him, as in Malta, to reject the idea of a CSCE summit conference next year. As America sees it the Federal Republic of Germany must not pull out of Nato, regardless of the new suprises which may lie ahead in the German Question.

"The USA will remain engaged in Europe," Bush announced clearly during his final press conference. And where else could they remain if not in Germany?

To the annoyance of Margaret Thatcher he added: "The events of our time require continued and perhaps even intensified efforts by the Twelve (European Community states) for integration."

Bush would like to see the European Community continue to act as a magnet for the forces of reform in Eastern Europe:

"The transatlantic partnership can create the architecture of a new Europe as well as a new Atlanticism," the President said euphorically.

Yet again it was unclear what the difference would be between the new and the old architecture.

Unimpressed by Bush's warnings the British Prime Minister later indicated that she would support neither the project of an economic and monetary union of the Twelve nor the social charter for the rights of employees during the forthcoming European Community summit in Strasbourg.

Britain's European Community partners feel that both moves would have a particularly positive influence on Eastern Europe. The increasingly isolated head of the British government is not at all interested in just how much importance Helmut Kohl, Francois Mitterrand and others attach to Community integration as an anchor for the Federal Republic of Germany in the wake of the growing uncertainty surrounding the German Question.

The subject of Germany virtually overshadowed a question which would have otherwise ranked as important in Brussels following the Bush-Gorbachov summit: if agreement is reached for the first time next year on a reduction of the conventional forces of the two pacts from the Atlantic to the Urals what could follow-on talks for a further disarmament in Europe look like?

Once again it was all too apparent that politicians prefer not to think too far ahead.

There was comforting consensus in the confirmation of how unexpectedly the situation in Europe had changed since the Nato summit in May just under seven months earlier.

Erich Hauser

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 6 December 1989)

GERMANY

The honest broker makes his breakthrough

Even when announcing news which makes most people jubilant, Rudolf Seiters, the Minister of State at the Bonn Chancellor's Office, keeps calm.

As the word spread in the parliamentary corridors that "the borders have gone" Bonn's chief negotiator in East Berlin preferred to talk of a "breakthrough" and a "facilitation of travel."

Aware of the problems ahead he said reorganisation of relations with the GDR is not "out of the woods yet."

In contrast to his habit of using words sparingly the man from Lower Saxony was extremely talkative when describing one of his best achievements in intra-German talks.

For a long time he had to keep silent about the difficulties on the way to the result now accepted by all parties.

Internally he kept telling the Chancellor's Office that the GDR was initially unwilling to pay a single D-mark from its foreign exchange revenue into the travel fund to give its citizens more spending power during their visits to the West.

Contrary to claims by Social Democrats the change of heart of the GDR leadership was not the automatic result of the avalanche-style process of reform in the East. It was the result of tough negotiations.

In confidential meetings some members of the GDR Opposition groups even said they regarded Bonn's terms as too difficult to meet.

This was a reference to Bonn's insistence that the GDR drop the foreign exchange minimum to be paid by West Germans visiting the GDR and its demand to do away with the compulsory visa.

Seiters refused to back down. In the end the East German negotiators were even relieved to be able to make their own contribution to the travel fund after hard currency excessesby the old SED guardcame into the open.

Seiters pointed out that the, in the meantime fugitive, former state secretary,



Deal sealed. Bonn negotiator Seiters (left) and East Berlin Premier Modrow. (Photo: dpa)

Alexander Schalck-Golodkowsky, was a member of the GDR delegation just a few days earlier.

The new trust between the Premier Hans Modrow, and Seiters, which will also supplement contractual obligations of the two states, even led to an embarrassed inquiry by Modrow what Bonn feels about the affair.

He was able to avert the embarrassment, said Seiters, by pointing out that Schalck-Golodkowsky had carried out the projects negotiated in a correct manner.

He emphasised that any misdemeanours are a matter between the GDR leadership and its former state secretary.

Amidst laughter Seiters added, however, that he had always only met Schalck in an official capacity.

During recent weeks Seiters had discernibly shown a great deal in the relationship of trust with the other side. This finally led to success.

At a time when caution still prevailed in the Bonn government and the view was generally taken that the GDR should only be given financial assistance to solve its humanitarian problems, Seiters was a driving force for more extensive support.

It did not go unnoticed in East Berlin that he advised his colleagues at home to intensify concepts for comprehensive cooperation before demanding free-market reforms.

Seiters was backed by the CDU business manager, Volker Rühe, and members of the CDU national executive committee.

Seiters knew how to make it clear to the GDR leadership that it would not lose money by dropping the minimum exchange rule and visa fee and pay its own reserves into the foreign exchange fund.

He said if this were done, the amount of assistance could be made more palatable to people in the West.

As assurances of aid became more concrete and a growing number of ideas on "mixed enterprises" began to take shape the parties soon realised that they had acted correctly.

The basic features of the results of negotiations already existed before Chancellor Kohl presented his 10-point concept for Germany with the goal of confederative structures between the two states.

Experts on Deutschlandpolitik in the Chancellor's Office even claim that the work of joint committees and intra-German regulations has already begun.

The joint administration, control and accounting procedure of the travel fund enables both sides to decide what is to be done with the exchanged Ostmarks.

The announcement of an investment protection agreement, double taxation agreements or altered customs provisions point in the same direction.

Seiters said Modrow had been expressly encouraged by Soviet leader Gorbachov to develop the "contractual community" with the Federal Republic.

As an honest chronicler, however, Seiters also added that Gorbachov had come out against reunification.

The honest broker in German-German affairs made a point of creating the impression that he has a satisfactory, indeed good relationship to the mayor of Berlin, Walter Momper, and the Berlin Senate.

The atmospherics between Momper and Bonn Chancellor Helmut Kohl represented an unnecessary weak point in the political discussion in the Federal Republic of Germany since the opening of the Berlin Wall on 8 November.

Seiters, who had constantly informed Mayor Momper and Senator Pfarr about his talks and was therefore particularly offended by the accusation of inactivity which came from Berlin; told the Mayor the good news on 5 December. According to Seiters Momper was well satisfied.

Seiters has achieved a great deal for the Berliners. He insisted, for example, that no difference be made at border crossings from West to East Berlin between residents of Berlin and West Germans.

Seiters is convinced that other impeding regulations would soon be dropped. Regulations would disappear as the meaninglessness of their practical implementation becomes apparent.

Heinz-Joachim Melder

(Der Tagesspiegel, Berlin, 7 December 1989)

Travel restrictions to East lifted

For the first time in 40 years, there is to be unimpeded freedom of travel within the whole of Germany. Bonn Chancellery State Minister Rudolf Seiters and East Berlin Premier Hans Modrow have agreed that, as from 1 January, West Germans and West Berliners will be able to travel to East Germany without a visa and without having to change DM25 a day into East marks at a rate of 1 to 1. A joint foreign-exchange fund is to be set up so East Germans will be able to travel to the West. They will be able to draw up to 200 West marks a year, half at one-to-one and half at one-to-five.

Despite all the fundamental differences a network of arrangements and agreements will gradually be created, moving towards the "contractual community" Hans Modrow would like to see.

As of next year visitors from the GDR will not longer have to rely on the rather humiliating practice of receiving DM100 "welcome money."

However, the new amount which can be exchanged when visiting the Federal Republic of Germany, DM200 a year per adult, is still too low.

Under current circumstances, however, this was probably the best possible result.

There are limits to the foreign exchange stocks in the GDR, and future cooperation will demand further financial concessions from the Federal Republic.

The regulation of travel money more or less anticipates a better economic future in which both sides find it easier to offset the currency disparity.

After the GDR already opened up its borders to the West on 9 November a breakthrough has now also been achieved in West-East tourist traffic.

The significance of these new regulations cannot be overrated.

In future it will be possible to travel freely between the two parts of Germany and the two parts of Berlin; all that's needed is a passport or an identity card.

The visa, the exchange minimum and the residence permits for visits to the GDR will be dropped.

At long last the GDR is opening itself to the West after opening the borders to the West for its own citizens.

Developments are under way which in the long term will make the Wall and the barbed-wire irrelevant.

The Bonn government places trust in the Modrow government which is by no means disputed in the GDR itself.

The agreed meeting between Modrow and Kohl on 19 December reflects this trust.

The fact that the two heads of government meet as equal partners without a prior visit to the general secretary of the SED is in itself a sign of normality.

Up to now the GDR has denied claims that the Bonn government is trying to stabilise the Modrow government.

In reality, however, this new form of German-German political intercourse can only foster such stabilisation.

Werner Kern

(Rheinische Post, Düsseldorf, 6 December 1989)

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cessary process of self-purification are marked by elements of open envy at the Japanese electronic gadgets and western sanitary ceramics found in the residence of former leading political figures.

This is more than understandable in a country with such a comparatively low standard of living.

The LDPD newspaper, for example, openly published details of a three-day pre-Christmas gala programme at the Grand Hotel in East Berlin, of *Hansel and Gretel* and *The Nutcracker Suite*, and of opulent candelight dinners on offer for DM977. Western tourists, of course, are also entitled to the same pleasures.

This is an obvious indication that there are privileged citizens in the GDR who can afford this sort of luxury.

Worried and upright comrades in the SED complain that the "press is going crazy" and that things are taking place "like they once did in the USSR."

Ever since the (East) *Berliner Zeitung* ran its famous article on the feudal residence of the head of the East German metalworkers' trade union IG Metall, Gerhard Nennsteil, in Berlin-Biesdorf on 1 November not a day has passed without the disclosure of a new affair by the new revelation journalism in the GDR. Mistrust is so widespread that even persons who who were regarded as beyond reproach suddenly find themselves under suspicion, as shown by the case of the lawyer Wolfgang Vogel.

The Public Prosecutor's Office alone is investigating 400 individual reports, the Civil Rights' Commission cannot cope with the number of phonecalls, and the special task force of the police is finding it extremely difficult to separate the wheat from the chaff.

The anger of the people is boiling and there is a fear in the GDR that the situation might get out of hand.

There were similar fears of a bloody escalation on 9 October in Leipzig.

All this because of growing number of revelations of the former arbitrariness, racketeering and despotic practices of former SED officials.

An anecdote frequently told in the popular hunting region of Suhl in the south of the GDR shows how the toppled regime dealt with its people:

"If Trade Minister Briska doesn't shoot a deer today the region of Suhl will have no bananas tomorrow."

Werner Kern

(Saarbrückener Zeitung, 7 December 1989)

PERSPECTIVE

Soon, a remnant of a wall will be all there is to remember a certain state by

RHEINISCHER MERKUR

In the not too distant future the only remnant of the GDR as we knew it will be a section of the Berlin Wall preserved as a monument of German history.

The dissolution of the East German state is reflected in the rapid pace of developments.

Whereas Egon Krenz still represented the GDR as head of state at the Warsaw Pact summit in Moscow on 4 December he was no present at the meeting between Hans Hans Modrow and Rudolf Seiters the following day, which ended with the historic decision to allow freedom of travel between the Federal Republic of Germany and the GDR.

One-and-a-half hours after the beginning of an extraordinary meeting of the Council of State on 6 December Egon Krenz relinquished all his offices.

Manfred Gerlach, the caretaker Council of State chairman, only needed a few minutes to announce a comprehensive amnesty for all prisoners serving sentences of up to three years.

The SED, which gathered at a party congress hastily organised on 8 and 9 December in East Berlin before the date originally planned, only had the choice between dissolution or division. A foundation which is contaminated to such an extent cannot be "reformed."

The vacuum called the GDR is being filled by a people's democracy, a people's democracy in the true sense of the word. In the spirit of the beginnings of the French Revolution of 1789.

First reports are coming in of attacks on installations belonging to the National People's Army in the GDR. State security police headquarters can no longer feel secure in the face of the people's anger.

Yet a mood of non-violence still prevails. The guilty are being brought to justice, not thrown to the lions.

Yet who can guarantee that these developments will not get out of hand?

The forces of change in the GDR take no notice of the wagging finger of admonition. Mikhail Gorbachov, who like the sorceror's apprentice who summoned up the spirits he can no longer cast aside, undoubtedly appreciates this fact.

If his policy of the self-determination of peoples is to remain credible, however, the Soviet leader can hardly change course now.

He has thus bound himself to a development which in excess — in the form of chaos — could swallow him up and engulf his experiment. Political weirs are now needed to control the flow of change.

Europe needs an unambiguous statement: no-one can now ignore the admissibility of the unity of Germany — regardless of whether this is called new unification, a federation or simply "the German osmosis."

In 40 years of democratic maturity the free part of Germany, the Federal Republic, has proved its worth as a reliable partner to the West.

To dispute this fact in view of the possibility of a dovetailing of the two German states simply on the grounds of fears associated with a former image of Germany would inflict deep wounds on the self-esteem of the new generation of Germans.

The GDR and Eastern Europe as a whole are experiencing a peaceful revolution of human rights, which increases the security of the West to a significant degree.

The deprivation of freedom is the root of instability in Europe — not arms. For a long time this was also Nato's basic premise. In the German case freedom is part of unity.

The West must be careful not to betray its own principles.

The sudden noticeable hardening of positions over the German Question in the corridors of power of all of Bonn's western partner countries and in Moscow is unmistakably connected with the fact that diplomatic circles are helpless in the face of the unstoppable.

This helplessness leads to a further hardening of positions, which in turn does not have a favourable influence on the climate in Germany.

No-one except right-wing extremists, who have always taken advantage of situations in which reason has not prevailed, would benefit in the long term from such from such a response.

The Bonn government can do a great deal to help reduce this helplessness among the leaders of Germany's neighbouring states.

Western Germany must now bring itself to nail its colours to the mast with respect to several key issues of its policies towards the East and West.

First and foremost this applies to the status of Poland's western border. Unfortunately, Chancellor Kohl failed to inform (if not consult) both the West and East in good time about his ten-point plan.

He also missed an excellent opportunity to include the decisive passages of the joint declaration of the German Bundestag of 8 November, the day before he began his visit to Poland, in his ten-point plan speech to the Bundestag.

In the speech the Chancellor made on 8 November we find the following:

"The Polish people should know that its right to live in secure borders will not be questioned by us Germans now nor in future by territorial claims. The wheel of history cannot be turned back."

It is absolutely essential that all executive bodies in the CDU and CSU should inform party members that, in the first version of any new "contractual community", the western and eastern parts of Germany should incorporate a binding declaration on the Oder-Neisse line, providing that this is ratified by a majority in two freely elected German parliaments — something which can undoubtedly be assumed.

We can no longer afford the luxury of deferring a clear statement on this issue to the conclusion of a peace treaty.

What could be more noble and binding than a majority declaration by the democratically legitimated bodies representing the people?

Those who point towards fears of the Republicans and who ask for a postponement of this crucial question until after the 1990 general election would document exactly the opposite of what we could reliably display to the world: the degree of our commitment to democracy and our self-confidence.

Any nebulosity in the face of the Republicans over an issue which requires such a common sense decision as the question of Poland's western border would merely confirm fears abroad.

We cannot create a better climate for the "German osmosis" and would seriously damage our own interests if we fail to carry out this act of obvious reason in the near future.

Furthermore, we need agreement on the establishment of a European central bank. It is the prerequisite for a European monetary community.

The Federal Republic of Germany cannot be fairly accused of having slowed down the European train or of having lost credibility.

After all, who got the train moving again by investing tremendous effort at the Community summit in Hanover in June 1988?

Helmut Kohl must extend this basis and clearly state his position by agreeing to the independence of a future central bank (a model which fits in with German desires) during the Strasbourg summit.

It is absolutely essential for the credibility of German politics that firm commitments are made in these two key areas of integration.

If in return we can again commit our neighbours to their former professions of support for German unity the Kohl plan would create a situation conducive to a more positive development. This would place a safety net under the unpredictable course of events in the GDR.

It would also prevent Germany's European neighbours from becoming too dizzy at the pace of developments in the German Question.

Thomas Kielinger

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 8 December 1989)

Continued from page 2

main message to Gorbachov, therefore, was that the western allies want this reform policy to develop in stability.

In Genscher's opinion this stability encompasses the full utilisation of all means of political, economic, technological and cultural cooperation with the reforming states of Central and Eastern Europe, with the Soviet Union high up on the list.

The acceleration of the disarmament and arms control policy should serve as a major prerequisite to such stability in order to reduce the military dimension of the East-West relationship.

In the long term it will be necessary in the interests of political stability in Europe to respect existing alliances. In line with *Nato's own philosophy*, *however*, their political dimension should be extended.

The political dimension could then lead to an all-European architecture, within the structure of which there would also be room for a united German nation.

In principle Gorbachov supports such a concept, even though he is not openly saying so at the moment.

Helmut Kohl's ten-point plan fits in with a geographically comprehensive development, but Genscher had to counter the impression in Moscow that Bonn, with the appointments diary in its hand as it were, wants to encourage this process at a faster pace than possible and expedient under existing political circumstances.

Genscher emphasised in Moscow that this path to change in Europe and in the world must be tread with responsibility, care and a sense of proportion.

Hans Jörg Sottorf

(Handelsblatt, Düsseldorf, 7 December 1989)

EAST BLOC ECONOMIES

Five steps towards getting East Germany on to its feet without losing its identity

Professor Wilhelm Hankel, who wrote this article for *Handelsblatt*, was head of the money and credit department at the Bonn Economic Affairs Ministry when Karl Schiller was the minister from 1966 to 1972. He now teaches currency and development policies at Frankfurt University.

Everyone, including both party members and the activists opposing them, know that the East German economy has to be turned upside down if it is to recover. Everyone wants to change the path but no one is quite certain how or in which direction.

A review of the economy from an investment and productivity point of view shows that there have been no less than five impediments to healthy development.

First. Like all the Comecon states with central economic planning, the German Democratic Republic lacks a money, credit and capital market. Huge surpluses build up in the GDR because there are no attractive savings bonds on offer, bonds which are reliable with adequate returns.

It should not be forgotten that anyone who goes short of things in life must have a tidy sum tucked away in the bank, and is prepared to spend. There could be something to buy tomorrow.

Anyone who wants to revive people's confidence in their cash, brought almost *to the brink of worthlessness*, must offer savings bonds whose returns in interest overcomes people's preferences to having cash in hand. But where could one find these savings bonds?

Perhaps the GDR leadership is pondering on a real socialisation of their state capitalist regime: privatisation of state-run companies. To do this they need an efficient credit system. Such a system would bring savers and investors together.

It does not have to be something along the lines of a bank. Cooperative banks and savings banks could perform this service.

Citizens in the GDR would then voluntarily be financiers and participants of "their" national assets, to which until now they have passively contributed: by pressures on wages, inflation and obligatory saving.

Socialist managers would not automatically get funds for investment according to a plan, but they would have to raise the money on the credit and capital market. They would be forced to demonstrate their creditworthiness before they could produce and invest. They would be legally responsible for the public capital they have demanded.

This would be the first, difficult step towards an entreprenurial society dependent on results.

Second. There is no free labour market in the GDR. There is no point in looking for a job individually and efficient trades unions cannot be formed, because jobs and salaries are standardised in the GDR.

The East German trades union confederation, FDGB, is a successor and evil caricature of the Nazi "Strength through Joy" movement. It is an association for workers holidays and leisure pursuits, but sadly only for the privileged.

In its production plans the GDR also ordains price, wage costs and tax rates. Above all it is this fatal standardisation of production and distribution which makes this job paradise so unbearably dreary, pointless and lacking in perspectives.

How else is it possible to explain away that the GDR, a modern industrial state, has such a low productivity rate and poor morale among its workers?

The GDR leadership would introduce three important reforms with the authorisation of free employment markets. Workers could apply for jobs with the highest pay; the trades unions would discover why they are there and for whom they are responsible.

The unions are there for wages and social benefits policies, geared to dynamic and productive standards, so that the GDR could become an attractive location for industries and investment.

Third. The GDR leadership's socialist decisions have been short-sighted, consequently they were counter-productive, creating waste.

Basic foodstuffs are heavily subsidised, semi-luxuries are taxed via production tax way beyond their real cost or import price level, a calculation which cannot be justified socially, fiscally and least of all economically.

It is not justifiable socially because cheap food benefits those who do not need this subsidy, for instance farmers, who feed cheap food to their pigs: fiscally not, because production tax is totally inadequate.

East Germans, and not only East Germans, have been angered to learn how the country's national budgets have been manipulated — for years the lack of income was "covered" with printed money and underhand debt.

People on low-incomes in the GDR would have been better served by a contribution towards their income than price subsidies which benefited all, bureaucrats and party bosses included.

A system of differentiated value-added tax allowances, following the example of many EC member states, would not only produce more cash for the GDR treasury, but luxuries could be more effectively taxed than via high prices in Intershops, the East German shops where luxury goods can be puchased only in hard currency.

Fourth. The GDR lacks effective export marketing in the West and hard currency markets. The tiresomeness of exporting to other East Bloc countries, which only earns weak currency, has been corrected by working together with the Federal Republic. But how to cooperate and to dare anything with another party if exporters are dominiated by the state and their earnings in foreign currency are taken from them?

The system really bites hard at this point. But why doesn't the GDR leadership give more freedom to those dynamic managers who have been successful in exporting to Western markets? Without any compulsions on them they would earn enough deutschemarks and dollars for the state bank.

Finally, these managers have to pay wages and salaries and manufacturing costs in Ostmarks and not in foreign currency.

Fifth. The GDR does not now need a convertible currency, but a constant exchange rate against the deutschemark, the most important trading currency for the GDR.

With an exchange rate to the deutschemark which was predictable within limits the Ostmark would be de facto convertible, which would be rewarded by East German savers and foreign investors. The flight of capital from Ostmarks to deutschemarks would stop.

This is the sole perestroika point, in which the GDR is dependent, and will remain dependent, on the help offered by the Federal Republic. This is why the proposed currency exchange fund is of vital importance.

The GDR can arrange all the rest itself and still retain its identity: banks, privatising companies, trades unions, appropriate subsidies, and price and tax structures. Until its citizens decide otherwise, that is.

Professor Wilhelm Hankel

(Handelsblatt, Düsseldorf, 5 December 1989)

Meeting agrees that shock treatment would not help

Ernst Albrecht, Prime Minister of Lower Saxony, invited eight economists to Hanover, his *Land* capital, for a symposium to discuss reforms in the German Democratic Republic and Eastern Europe.

Their most important finding was that there is no recipe for the change from the bankrupt central planning of the state with "real existing socialism," the GDR, to a free market economy.

They were all agreed that shock treatment for the ailing East German, Russian and Polish economies would not be healthy. They said that the GDR probably had the best chances of gradually standing on its own two feet.

Ernst Albrecht intends to commission two investigations: one to find out how the GDR currency can regain its proper functions in the economy through currency reform; the second will investigate how Polish agriculture could be made efficient.

Herr Albrecht said that changing the GDR's economy would be difficult but at the same time easier than in other Comecon countries.

The Minister said that it would be easier because the free market economy tradition, exercised in previous times, had not been totally obliterated from the GDR, and more difficult because the continuous emigration of young people from the GDR to the Federal Republic had already harmed the economy beyond all measure and had probably brought it close to collapse.

There were expressions of deep pessimism and cautious optimism in the symposium's judgments on future developments. Klaus Leciejewski from the Cologne-based Institute for the German Economy said there was an urgent need to export knowledge and information to the GDR.

He asked for tax relief for West Germans who sent books as presents into the GDR or took out subscriptions for newspapers and magazines for GDR citizens.

He said: "Everyone in East Germany knows *Dynasty* but no one is acquainted with the expression share certificate."

Paul Dembinski is a Polish economist living in exile in Geneva. He warned against pursing a policy which stabilised the exhausted communist system.

He warned that by doing this the requirements for the startup of a free market would not be created, because there are at present nowhere in Eastern Europe reliable partners.

Herr Dembinski said ironically that in Warsaw it was being said in the streets that "We have experimented for 40 years and we've had enough of that. We now want a recipe for an economic system which works."

Günter Hedtkamp, head of the Munich-based Eastern Europe Institute, went along with Herr Albrecht and emphasised how important it was for a sound money policy in those countries which wanted to surmout their planned-economy past.

Herr Albrecht gained considerable experience of *Ordnungspolitik*, economic policy proceeding from, and taking as its yardstick of performance, an ideal-type free market system, in the 1960s among EC officials in Brussels. He emphasised that socially-acceptable currency reform in the GDR and the other states was necessary and possible.

Herr Albrecht said that the high level of savings among East Germans, for example, meant that cash could be funnelled into state-owned assets. He was obviously thinking of the privatisation of state-owned companies.

He said that room for manoeuvre must be offered to small savings accounts in the GDR. Herr Albrecht said: "It cannot be said to a worker who has slaved away for 20 or 30 years that his savings are instantly worthless."

Günter Hedtkamp amplified this. He said that unlike savings in the West those in Eastern Europe had no value.

The participants in the Hanover symposium were all agreed that central banks should be set up and that the banking system, which until now has only played a subordinate role in Eastern Europe, should be modernised and made more efficient.

Lothar Altmann of the Munich-based Südostinstitut said that the GDR had better chances for building up its economy than any of the other Comecon countries.

He pointed out that there were well-trained workers in the GDR and that there were a number of private firms in the country, particularly in the service industries.

He said that although management and economics teachers at universities in the GDR knew very little about modern Western theory; and that business management in the GDR was more often guided by party directives and not according to efficiency, East Germany had a considerable attraction to Federal Republic industry, more so than Poland or the Soviet Union.

At the end of the symposium Herr Albrecht said that the population in the GDR had a high percentage of old people among it and there were many "missing." This meant that modernising the infrastructure would over-tax the state.

He said that this modernisation would cost not millions but billions, pointing to the deplorable condition of East German streets and railway carriages.

The same was true for state-run firms, he said. "The state can't modernise them. That can only be done by the private sector."

Hans-Peter Sattler

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 2 December 1989)

THE MOTOR INDUSTRY

Daimler-Benz in talks with East German firms

Daimler-Benz wants closer cooperation with East German firms. Talks are taking place with VEB IFA Kombinat Nutzfahrzeuge about the possible joint manufacture of heavy trucks. Daimler-Benz might consider a minority holding in any new project.

Just a few days after the final confirmation of the merger between Daimler-Benz and the aerospace group MBB the head of Daimler-Benz, Edzard Reuter, said that the development towards an integrated technology group was coming along according to plan.

In the foreseeable future, however, the motor business, which was concentrated in the Mercedes-Benz field of operations this year, will remain the key area of group activities and account for three quarters of group turnover.

That's not all. Reuter said that during this financial year cars would also be the main source of revenue.

The increase in the number of new registrations, said Reuter, is an indication that quality and safety concepts have been chosen correctly.

In reference to public speculations Reuter claimed that the firm need no longer worry that it might have to face up to a takeover bid by BMW in 30 to 50 years time.

This year Mercedes expects to sell 550,000 vehicles worldwide. This is roughly the same figure as last year.

According to Reuter the number of new orders from the domestic and foreign markets is satisfactory and prospects are good for the coming year.

In the commercial vehicle segment West German production plants are working to full capacity. A production figure of 160,000 transporters, heavy goods vehicles and buses is expected. Mercedes expects a worldwide sales figure of 257,000 commercial vehicles.

Daimler-Benz will increase group turnover by four per cent this year to DM76bn. Mercedes will have an increase of two per cent to DM56bn.

AEG, which concentrates on the fields of the future, electrotechnology and electronics, boosts turnover by six per cent to over DM12bn. There will be an above-average increase in turnover abroad.

The newly created aerospace subsidiary Deutsche Aerospace AG (Dasa) will account (without MBB) for a turnover figure of DM8bn. Despite this year's uncertainties this is ten per cent up on the comparable figure last year.

Daimler-Benz holds 50.24 per cent of MBB's capital. This will increase to 61 per cent in January.

In March next year the Daimler supervisory board will finally decide on the setting up of a fourth area of operation for service functions. In this area (systems house, financial services, insurance, trading house and marketing) a turnover of DM3.7bn is expected this year.

A year ago Reuter gave information on the dividend. This year he merely said that the surplus would be about the same as last year's figure.

Jens Peter Eichmeier

(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 6 December 1989)

Volkswagen prepares for joint venture to make Trabants

The only thing the new Trabant which the Volkswagen group in Wolfsburg wants to develop and construct together with the VEB IFA Kombinat Pkw combine in Karl-Marx-Stadt will have in common with today's Trabant is its name.

The Trabant of the future need no longer fear a comparison with Western European cars and is to be made exportable to both East and West.

Before the end of the year VW and IFA want to set up a limited company (GmbH) in accordance with West German law with its seat in the Federal Republic of Germany to pave the way for the project.

This company will prepare the planning, development, production and distribution of cars and transporters.

Providing the GDR introduces the legal preconditions for cooperation and joint ventures this company will eventually become a joint venture.

Talking to the radio station *NDR Radio Niedersachsen* the deputy managing director of VW, Horst Münzner, said that the share capital of the limited company could be DM1m.

Both partners should have a fifty per cent stake. The need for further capital will depend on the type of vehicle planned and the volume of production.

Nothing more exact is known about the details of the Trabant successor.

It seems pretty certain, however, that there will be more than just simple modifications of today's model.

The new Trabant will probably be the

Süddeutsche Zeitung

most modern car which can currently be produced.

It has to come up to western standards, since the company is planning distribution on a large scale.

VW will try to discover more about existing market potential. It is hoped that the new model will be sold in both Eastern and Western Europe.

It is not clear when the first "Super-Trabant" will come off the assembly line. Before production can begin a number of political decisions must be taken.

The political situation represents the greatest factor of uncertainty for companies involved in business in the GDR.

Volkswagen's plans for business in the GDR go a great deal further than any other western car industry company.

The project not only reveals an interest in an attractive sales market, but also gives Volkswagen an opportunity to produce at lower costs without moving production to Southern Europe or East Asia.

Volkswagen has had very good contacts to the GDR for years.

The first contacts were established in the mid-1970s, culminating in 1978 in the proposal by VW to help "reconstruct the GDR car industry." At the

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INDUSTRY

Chilling thought for energy suppliers: competition

The energy industry senses hardships in the offing. The cause: competition.

The European Commission in Brussels cannot see why trading in electricity and gas should be limited to the present companies and the regulations covering it should remain valid for ever.

The Commission has, therefore, presented proposals as to how the structures of these markets can be opened up.

The pivotal factor is reorganising in-and-out transmission of both types of energy voluntarily.

In simple terms this means that all companies must open their networks to competitors for an appropriate fee, provided these competing companies want to supply customers who are outside their network.

The pros and cons of this principle are now being heatedly debated. The EC Commission expects considerable price reductions as a result of the increased competition: but a study, undertaken at the Commission's request by Coopers & Lybrand and Prognos, came to the opposite conclusion.

Their reason for this was that interesting major customers could be lost to regional suppliers of electricity and gas through the "taking the pick of the bunch" principle. This could make it necessary to have to apply high fixed costs on fewer customers, which would mean a price increase for smaller clients.

The study also envisaged that supply regularity could be endangered by such a change in the structure of the industry.

The West German energy industry is up in arms about this and is protesting in Bonn and Brussels against these proposals. West German industry circles regard the French as being behind them.

In fact France has a vital interest in such an arrangement. Over the past 15 years France has built up enormous capacities to supply electricity through an ambitious nuclear power-plant programme.

But the demand for electricity is considerably less than expectations. Under normal conditions there would be an enormous surplus of power, which could only sensibly be used by electricity exports.

It must be pointed out, however, that normal conditions do not prevail at the present because a lot of nuclear power-plant capacities are not available due to various difficulties.

Since the electricity-supply industry is to all intents and purposes in the hands of the state, Paris considers an opening up of frontiers for power exports as a national matter.

With these points in mind it was interesting to hear what Jean Bergougnoux, general director of the state-owned Electricité de France, had to say about this problem.

Speaking to West German journalists in Paris he put forward proposals which could be regarded as falling between an offer of an olive branch and an attempt at blackmail.

He said that in principle France would not insist on an alteration of the present system of an association of European energy companies. But he named two fundamental conditions for this acquiescence.

The West German *Jahrhundertvertrag*, a system of additional charges on electricity to subsidise West German expensive coal, which favours the conversion of coal into electricity, should not be used as a brake for increased cross-frontier power supplies.

He added that in addition there must be a coordination of investment in nuclear power-plant within the European Community.

If this came about M. Bergougnoux said that his company would not oppose an arrangement in which in future electricity could be supplied exclusively among suppliers: in other words supplying electricity direct to a customer outside the sphere of interest of a supplier company would be banned.

He offered his colleagues in the Federal Republic the hand of conciliation, but he did not take away the knife he held at their throat.

Jean Bergougnoux regards the conversion of German coal into power as standing in the way of the swift extension of cross-frontier electricity supplies.

He does not see that even in the most unlikely event that the West German mining industry were to be completely closed down, that the modern coal-fired power stations, fitted with every refinement for environmental protection, would not be mothballed but would be operated with far more inexpensive imported coal.

The French government is determined to increase power exports and so limit the French current account problems, mainly with the Federal Republic.

In principle the West German industry does not disapprove of this, particularly if the industry can ward off the pressure on it to open up its supply network. This could be extremely disagreeable to West German electricity suppliers due to cost structures.

One has to bear in mind that the Karlsruhe-based Badenwerk AG has two blocks of shares in French nuclear power stations and is partly supplied from these stations.

The Munich-based Bayernwerk AG has in mind a similar arrangement, and Bayernwerk has recently set up a working group along with Electricité de France, which will consider future forms of cooperation.





One point should be borne in mind, however. If demand in the Federal Republic soars beyond present capacities, then it would be worth considering where the next power stations should be built.

Experience has shown that considerations should take into account increased cooperation with Electricité de France, which now, years before building should begin, has available a good dozen locations approved for the construction of nuclear power stations and which local politicians want to see built.

In this respect the French desire to have discussions about investment should not shock the Germans. Eventually the question of the location of power stations and electricity supplies will be seen in quite a different light from today when the single European market comes into existence.

Helmut Maier-Mannhart

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 1 December 1989)

Cuts in steel production planned as the boom disappears

The steel industry boom in the European Community and the Federal Republic is drawing to an end. The market is quietening down.

Between 1975 and 1986 the industry was in crisis and lost assets. Major companies in the EC were only able to survive with the assistance of DM100bn. But the industry has made unexpectedly high profits from the upswing of the past two years.

The favourable economic conditions have now lasted three years. When the upturn came about in 1987 no one believed that it would continue. In the steel industry's bad years the disappointments were too deep and too frequent, so it was easy to understand that industry soothsayers continuously warned against depending on the upswing too much, which in summer showed signs of overheating through supply difficulties. The US domestic price for steel dropped steeply, so that it was not worth exporting there. In September the US imports rate accounted for only 17 per cent of requirements, the lowest rate for the past ten years.

Because of this the competition in the past few weeks and months has intensified considerably. Parallel to this American steel manufacturers have become much more aggressive than they were in concerning themselves with exports.

This has caused marked price reductions for many steel products in the past few weeks, which has affected European markets adversely. But there is no question that prices and markets have collapsed. In 1974/1975 the steel industry experienced the best year in its history which was overtaken by the worst crisis in living memory.

To maintain the present favourable conditions and to avoid a repetition of the 1974/1975 experience, a group of major steel manufacturers in the European Community have decided to take a remarkable step: They plan to cut back their production so as to counter market weaknesses.

These measures will be applied in the New Year since it is usual that between Christmas and January steelworks are completely closed down. For the first time this standstill period is to be extended. It is expected that there will be a decline of up to five per cent in the winter months.

Steel managers hope that this will prevent further price erosions and will keep the market under control.

It remains to be seen whether these measures fulfill expectations. Experience has shown that it is just in periods when the market is weak that many companies strive to gain additional market shares through low prices.

But the others do not generally stand for this in the long-term. It sets in motion a vicious circle which is often sufficient to spark off a complete collapse of price levels in this structured market.

The actual facts are a long way away from this frightening scenario, which the industry fears as much as the Devil fears holy water.

The economy is still doing well, particularly in the capital goods sector, building industry, steel construction and the car industry. As a consequence the steel industry estimates that steel production in 1990 will be about 41.5 million tons, only five per cent below production in 1989. Many steel industry products are in such demand that price increases can be introduced for them up to 1 January next year.

Reorganisation plans will become pressing again with the termination of the steel boom, plans which were shelved when the economy was overheating. The industry's Frankfurt Agreement called for a "socially-acceptable" reduction of 20,000 jobs over the next few years in the West German steel industry. The planned mothballing of the Krupp Rheinhausen steelworks is still on the agenda. Two years ago proposals to close down these works caused considerable agitation for months on end among the workers involved, large sectors of the population in the Ruhr and the German public as a whole.

On 12 January the first Rheinhausen blast furnace will be closed down. It is planned to close down the second at the end of next year.

The period of perfect joy in the steel industry will come to an end with the boom.

Heiner Radzio

(Handelsblatt, Düsseldorf, 4 December 1989)

Gas consumption likely to rise, says report

The Basle-based consultancy organisation Prognos says there will be enough energy over the next 20 years and that energy prices will increase by about 30 per cent.

In a report, commissioned by the Economic Affairs Ministry, it says that energy consumption will only increase up to 1995, but will steeply drop after that date. The losers will be oil and coal: nuclear energy will remain as it is but gas consumption will increase markedly.

The decline in consumption will probably be brought about by technical innovations in energy-consuming equipment, through better processing and by considerable economies.

The consumption of energy in the private household, in heating and for hot water, will drop markedly. Consumption will only increase among small consumers such as in trade, banks or insurance companies.

Oil will provide 36.4 per cent of energy requirements by the year 2010, making it the largest source of energy, but almost six per cent less than in 1988, in terms of the equivalent of heating produced by tons of coal 28 million tons less.

Prognos believes that from 1995 onwards less and less oil will be used in the transport industry. Oil's share of the market will be eroded by gas mainly, whose share of the market will increase from its present 16.2 per cent to 23 per cent at the end of the first decade in the next century.

The 12 per cent of energy demand met by nuclear energy will remain the same, but electrical power imports and water-power will increase from the present 1.5 per cent of requirements to 4.11 per cent. Solar and wind energy will be of little significance in the year 2010.

The coal industry will have to come to terms with considerable losses. Up to 1995 the use of coal for energy purposes will drop to 66.1 million tons. Electrical power will account for only 32.4 million tons of this total and 2.6 million tons will be used to produce district heating, that is heating piped into homes and buildings.

The steel industry will only need 6.3 million tons and there will be no exports of energy.

Hans Overberg

(Kieler Nachrichten, 28 November 1989)

THE ENVIRONMENT

Storm brewing in a plastic bottle

In September last year Bonn Environment Minister Klaus Töpfer was triumphant.

He had declared war on industry and its ecologically harmful plastic beverage bottles — and won.

The Bonn cabinet decided to charge a deposit of fifty pfennigs on all plastic bottles by 1 December at the latest and obliged manufacturers and distributors to take back the empty and otherwise non-returnable bottles.

Töpfer's commendable initiative to keep even more plastic waste away from the refuse tips is now being thwarted by the European Community.

Brussels has demanded that the regulation on deposits should be dropped by 1 December, 1990.

Of all people it was the German European Community Commissioner Martin Bangemann who began the attack on Töpfer's move.

Bangemann already sided with industry and the retail trade in 1987 during his period as Bonn Economics Minister.

He felt that the deposit plans for plastic bottles were a threat to the sovereignty of industry.

In Brussels Bangemann continues his struggle on industry's behalf. He views Töpfer's regulation as an illegal barrier to trade and turned it into a case for the European Commission.

The regulation does indeed have protectionist implications, since it mainly affects foreign manufacturers of drinks.

In line with Töpfer's objectives West German retail traders have gradually removed plastic bottles from their shelves.

These include the mineral waters of French and Belgian bottlers, who supply about 200 million PVC bottles to the Federal Republic of Germany each year and thus account for a roughly four per cent share of the mineral water market.

They now stand to lose a great deal of their turnover. In addition, the obligation to take back the bottles is expensive, since the empty bottles must be transported back to France or Belgium and processed there.

West German bottlers, on the other hand, are hardly affected by Töpfer's regulation. They have joined forces in the Association of German Mineral Springs and use the standard glass bottle through a kind of pool for returned empties. This bottle is much less damaging to the environment than the plastic bottle.

The Association now refuses to let foreign manufacturers join the returnable system. The foreign manufacturers for their part do not want to drop the PVC bottles which have been so successful worldwide.

The European Commission has called upon Töpfer to defer the new deposit regulation by one year and come up with a more flexible system for the return of the plastic bottles until then.

Court action is alternative

If Töpfer fails to comply with the Commission's demands the latter considers taking legal action against Bonn at the European Court of Justice on grounds of trade restraint.

Bonn's Environment Ministry, however, is convinced that it has acted on the basis of existing Community law.

In fact, a general directive calls upon European Community members to ensure a reduction of waste through recycling and returnable systems.

The Bonn Environment Ministry claims that the problems for competition arise because most Community members do not observe this directive.

The question yet again is how far the advocates of the free market in Brussels can counteract national environmental interests.

Töpfer should not give in too fast in his fight against plastic bottles.

Even if he defies the European Community simply for reasons of election tactics this can only be beneficial for the environment.

Judith Reicherzer

(Die Zeit, Hamburg, 1 December 1989)

Eco farmers to get protection from "unfair competition"

The European Community wants to protect "ecological farming" against unfair competition.

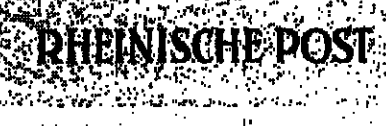
A legislative initiative of the European Commission announced in Brussels on 1 December envisages the introduction of Community-wide regulations on the type of cultivation and on the controls and labelling of "eco-products."

This would include particularly strict regulations on the use of chemicals in farming.

The European Commission intends stipulating what can be used to maintain the fertility of the soil in biological farming or to fight against parasites, disease and weeds.

The proposals, which have yet to be approved by the Council of Ministers, also plan controls at all levels of the production and marketing or farm produce which has the "eco" label.

To preserve fair competition there should be Community-wide agreement



on the requirements which have to be met before a product can be sold with the label "ecologically farmed."

The Community's Agriculture Commissioner, Ray MacSharry, said that, because of the less intensive utilisation of the soil, ecological farming contributes towards producing fewer surpluses.

He added that it enables farmers to establish additional sources of income, since ecologically grown produce is often sold at relatively high prices.

In view of the growing demand biological farming is a "new niche on the markets for farm produce."

dpa/vwd

(Rheinische Post, Düsseldorf, 2 December 1989)

Plans for Euro agency run into scathing criticism

At first glance what the European Community Environment Ministers recently decided looks good: to set up a European environment agency, which can gather, compare and evaluate reliable data and make the information available to governments, the Community Commission and the European public.

According to plans in Brussels the Community agency, which is to begin its work by the beginning of 1991 at the latest, should have the task of providing the foundations of a European environmental protection policy as well as technical and scientific support for Community governments.

It will simply try to network the existing institutions which gather information on the environment in the member states.

There can, it would seem, be no objection to such a new institution, which is the brainchild of the president of the Community Commission, Jacques Delors.

In reality, however, all environmental organisations surveyed by the SPD member of the European Parliament, Beate Weber, clearly rejected the idea.

The chairwoman of the Environment Committee in the European Parliament is by no means surprised.

A closer look at the project soon reveals embarrassing shortcomings in the new institution, which is basically no more than a centre for pooling information.

"In its current form the European Community environment agency is an absurd instrument," says Beate Weber, an environment expert from Heidelberg.

She feels all the premature praise for the agency is eyewash. Actionism by Environment Ministers who pretend to be busy doing their utmost on behalf of the environment but are making very little real headway.

"What the new agency in its planned form can do has been done for many years by long-standing organisations.

There is no need for a new institution," Beate Weber points out.

She lists the institutions which already gather data on the environment: the Statistical Office of the European Communities ("Eurostat"), the Community research centres in Ispra and Karlsruhe, the United Nations, the OECD, the national environment authorities and, finally, the Community Commission itself.

There are 50 legal agreements in which Community member states have made commitments to make data on the environment available.

These commitments, however, have been pretty ineffective, Beate Weber claims.

In reality the information was not provided.

In many cases the member states do not even have the structures enabling proper data-gathering.

Beate Weber is convinced that the new Community environment agency will not improve the situation.

The new data centre, with its twenty employees, does not have enough powers.

Its name was inspired by the US Environment Agency, which is structured in a completely different way and has more money and staff.

Hannoversche Allgemeine

For this reason the Environment Committee of the European Parliament calls for a fundamental change of the plans for the agency.

Community member states should be obliged to create structures for gathering data on the environment and actually providing the data.

"The European Community's environment agency must have clear tasks, be able to develop its own momentum and become a kind of independent personality," says Beate Weber.

A European environment agency worthy of the name must be able to do more than just gather data.

It should also be able to control the state of the environment and compliance with the Community's environmental laws.

It could then become an independent "European environment inspectorate."

The expertise of agency staff should be utilised when preparing international agreements.

The environmental acceptability checks envisaged in a number of Community directives could be carried out by the neutral Community agency and not by national authorities which often have to check themselves.

It is already clear that the European Parliament will reject the decision by the *Environment Ministers* with a large majority ranging from the British Conservatives to the various left-wing groups.

Should this fail to make an impression on the Community's Council of Ministers the Euro-MPs can use the lever of the Parliament's budgetary law and block the provision of funds for the Community environment agency. "We want a Community environment agency which works, but not this miscarriage," Beate Weber emphasised.

Thomas Gack

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 4 December 1989)

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end of 1984 an agreement was drawn up on the joint production of car engines in the GDR.

There are plans that the GDR combine should supply 430,000 1.3-litre engines within four years; Volkswagen will provide the plant and equipment for the licensed production of the engines.

Furthermore, Volkswagen has been buying material in the GDR since the mid-1970s; for roughly DM50m a year.

About DM10m were spent on investment goods such as large presses or press tools and DM40m for direct or indirect parts supplies — for example, headlights, glass screens or signal horns.

The GDR imports three quarters of all its western car imports from Wolfsburg. 27,000 vehicles have been delivered since 1978.

The annual volume consists of 2,500 Golfs, 250 transporters and — via the Genex gift service — 200 Passats.

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 6 December 1989)

THE ARTS

The message of the Liedermacher comes with an anachronistic twang

Franz-Josef Degenhardt, Dieter Süverkrüp, Hanns-Dieter Hüsch and others who write and sing political songs made guest appearances at a Cologne theatre. Barbara Bückmann used the occasion to look at German *Liedermacher*, singer-songwriters, in an era of changed social conditions.

The singer-songwriters were tired. Franz-Josef Degenhardt only performed old songs. Süverkrüp no longer makes public appearances and Hannes Wader is working on a recording of folk songs.

Walter Mossmann's leaflet songs have got tatty and Hanns-Dieter Hüsch does not think up new songs any more. But then, he was never a true *Liedermacher*, rather a cabaret artist with "a long-term effect on marketing," as he himself put it.

That was his consolation when he was whistled off the stage at the great Burg-Waldeck folk festival in 1966 — because he did not get worked up about the agitation movements of the times. The organisers at that time declared themselves to be a "component of international resistance."

The famous five from Waldeck, Hüsch and his colleagues, recently put on a "Week of Political Songs" at Cologne's Comedia Colonia. Almost every evening was a sell-out. But are these artists with beards and guitars now astonishingly part of the older generation?

The manageress of a large Cologne record shop said: "The *Liedermacher* business is dead." She said that when a new Hannes Wader record came out in the mid-1980s she would have ordered 1,000. "Today, we sell 50 and that's that."

There is a loyal public following for these performers, fans who go to their concerts. The trend is also noticeable in the record business. The left-wing "Pläne" music publishing house in Dortmund had to take Süverkrüp from its lists five years ago.

Pläne music publishing house spokeswoman Angela Maidl said: "This music had a 1970s sound about it."

Franz-Josef Degenhardt is under contract to Polygram. He won the German record prize 18 years ago and was among the top ten in pop music, close behind Freddy Quinn.

Nowadays recording producers are not too keen on using the term *Liedermacher*. Angela Heede of Polygram said: "In the public mind that stands for just a solitary singer with a guitar."

Pop, rock and hit-song influences have been added. This is why she now regards Herbert Grönemeyer (the actor who appeared in the widely-acclaimed film *Das Boot*) and Konstantin Wecker as modern *Liedermacher*.

They are all critical in some way or other, up to Udo Jürgens' album *Ehrenwertes Haus*.

But this has nothing to do with our old campaigners whose songs were banned by radio stations and schools, songs such as Dieter Süverkrüp's *Baggerführer Willibald*.

The lyrics are full of injustices and historical errors, but more subtle, refined, poetic, more clever and more durable than much that followed.

Books of the lyrics with fingering for guitar flooded the market and made it possible for every little amateur political group to demonstrate its political involvement.

Singers of political songs were at their zenith so long as there was something going on such as the Easter March against nuclear armaments, student protests, demonstrations against nuclear-recycling plant and peace movement enthusiasts.

Today it seems that only sociologist Uwe Kleigrewe, organiser of the Comedia Colonia event, is convinced that there is a need for political songs.

He said: "Complicated connections, inconsistencies and social criticism is being put out in a simplified form at every social level." That is good old apologists' jargon. But Degenhardt himself sings that he has lost his enemy images in the "libertarian large cities."

It must be admitted that on reading the lyrics a sense of embarrassed tenderness creeps in. In those days it was easier to make out the good from the bad.

There was solidarity against the bosses, war-mongers messed about with the fat cats of commerce and industry, men in public life presumed to be honourable fanned the flames of funeral pyres and urchins hated the people born the other side of the tracks.

Good rhymes came out of all this. The mixture of satirical observation and melancholy, revolutionary pathos and irony was unbeatable. But singer-songwriters are no longer fighting for their ideas.

In a public discussion in the Comedia Colonia they were in well-ordered retreat in view of the complexities of the present situation. They had nothing to say about the changes in the East Bloc. This must have meant that for the first time these sharp analysts were in accord with the political position.

The atmosphere is no longer suitable for *Liedermacher*. They are now looking for an honourable way out. They now don't have much of an audience and



don't want one any longer. They want to shed the moral responsibility, which has burdened them.

They want to have their say on exploitation and repression, seals and the gap in the ozone layer. They want to make an appearance to show solidarity here, and a charity concert there.

But as thanks for the appearances at the Comedia Colonia they were abused as "the oldsters team" and "traitors."

Walter Mossmann, the last of the old campaigners, is on the way to a new form of artistic commitment with overpowering, atonal long ballades.

Dieter Süverkrüp is again devoting his time to drawing and writes and illustrates children's books. He said: "I'm tired of observing world history just through the sound-hole of a guitar."

His music and play on words was very complicated, his guitar fingering was worthy of a virtuoso. But music today is going in the direction of rhythm machines.

Hannes Wader made a detour from his concert tour to appear in Cologne, but he has otherwise gone off to a corner of North Friesland to sulk. He seems contrary and now says that he had never been "political."

In winter he intends to return to his musical roots. But despite the new folk music he is still broadcast from all radio stations.

Only Hanns-Dieter Hüsch can press ahead with his "march of the minorities." He recites his piquant stories and "spoken" songs with charm and cunn-

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No longer an idol... Wolf Biermann. (Photo: dpa)

Rebel singer goes back East and finds he's not relevant any more



Political singer-songwriter Wolf Biermann was given a restrained reception when he appeared in Leipzig, 24 years after he was banned from performing in the German Democratic Republic, where he was born.

This showed that Biermann at 52 is still a prickly and controversial performer.

In 1976 he came to the Federal Republic for a ten-day concert tour and remained. He was stripped of his East German citizenship. Now he is allowed to return to the part of Germany where he was born.

He gave two concerts in Leipzig and East Berlin, but the atmosphere showed how things had changed in East Germany.

It was also obvious that Biermann, the *Liedermacher* of the missed chances for political change of the 1970s, is no longer the idol of young people in the GDR today.

In Leipzig there was a stage 2 smog alarm: inside Leipzig Fair Hall 7 Biermann tried to get things moving. But he only struck the right note when he referred to the current situation in East Germany.

A student said: "You can't attract our generation, you can't attract many 20-year-olds in the GDR today with old songs and dreams of a socialist community."

Another, like so many others, had come to Biermann's concert only out of curiosity. He said: "I can't understand what he is all about. Biermann has nothing to do with our affairs."

Since he came to the West Biermann has been living in Hamburg. No-one in his audience could understand his utopian vision of the victories of socialism in view of the present situation in the GDR.

But they were in tune with Biermann when he attacked the SED hierarchy. His ballad about the "corrupt old men," meaning the SED leadership, was frequently interrupted with laughter.

In Biermann's ballad about the present GDR leader, Egon Krenz, the lyric spoke of a "secret police cancer on the sick body of the state party." That was well received by the public.

There was a flood of sympathy for Biermann at the end of his Leipzig concert. He gave autographs with tears in his eyes. He had a nostalgic effect during his appearances in the GDR, where he has been banned for so long.

He said: "I'm very happy, very excited. For 24 years I was banned, and I'll never forget who I have to thank for that.

"But I shall also never forget whom I have to thank that I can sing here again. You." He said this with a red carnation in his hand.

To many it sounded an inconsistency when Biermann implored the people to continue with the democratic revolution in the country, but saying at the same time that "life in the West was really much better and more pleasant."

He shouted at the people: "It is to your credit that the GDR has become a country in its own right and is no longer an appendage of the Soviet Union."

In his "lopsided view" the Federal Republic was "no answer for the human problems, which face us all here."

He said that he was in favour of the frontiers being pulled down but, "I am not happy about the 'Deutschland, Deutschland über alles' mood, which is prevalent."

In East Berlin his concert was reduced to normality, even sobriety. There was no thundering applause, people were not over-enthusiastic and no one had tears in the eyes.

For the concert the wheat was separated from the chaff and only the chosen ones were allowed admittance, mainly the press and GDR people connected with the arts.

One visitor called the event "a massive mess." He was on the staff of the GDR radio station and got by accident one of the 400 tickets which were given out.

The media were very extravagant: eight Federal Republic radio stations were linked up to the concert.

The concert carried the slogan: "Singer-songwriters from both German states," and included Eva Maria Hagen, Gerhard Schöne, Jürgen Eger, Stefan Krawczyck, Gerulf Pannach and Bettina Wegner, a mixture of "those who left" and "those who stayed behind," who could appear together for the first time.

Biermann himself came in for displeasure. During his performance there were shouts that he benefited from capitalism, but Biermann countered these

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FILMS

Honorary dove for big sing-song about Sung

Hannoversche Allgemeine

The International Leipzig Documentary and Short-Film Festival was opened with a film entitled *Leipzig im Herbst* which at the close was given the symbolic "Leipzig Dove 1989" prize.

It is not accidental that the film harked back to the West German production *Deutschland im Herbst*. This was a joint production by well-known Federal Republic directors and was an obituary for the hopes of the 1968 movement.

The East German documentary film-makers, on the other hand, were celebrating in their film the new departures taking place in their own country.

Film students from the East German film centre Babelsberg, near Postdam, were the first to react to the new situation in East Germany.

Spontaneously they went to Dresden. They shot film, at the beginning illegally, with just the backing of their rector. They also filmed in East Berlin, in the Gethsemane Church, on the streets and city squares.

They spoke to demonstrators and the police, pastors and officials. They formed a public platform for those to have their say who had been beaten up and humiliated after they had been arrested.

These student contributions were also given an honorary Golden Dove. They were justly the dominating event of this year's Leipzig Festival against which most of the 300 or more contributions to the festival faded into insignificance.

A year ago many of these entries to the festival would have been sensational; for instance the Polish television documentary, *Die Parade* by Andrzej Fidyk, dealing with the religious personality cult which surrounds the North Korean "Great Leader," Kim Il Sung. This film, which has already won prizes in Cracow and Mannheim, was given a Golden Dove.

The Third World is always well represented at the Leipzig Festival. The award of a Golden Dove to the Indian production, *Working Women* by G.L. Bhardwaj, was in line with the festival's traditions.

Michael Moore's *Roger and me* was given a Silver Dove. This American film was of a kind which is very much in favour in Leipzig.

It was a social study of the catastrophic consequenses of the closure of a General Motors factory in a small town in Michigan.

East German Roland Steiner's documentary *Unsere Kinder* was awarded a Silver Dove, an honour given more for Steiner's involvement in taboo themes than for the convincing qualities of the film.

The film explored the motives of skinheads and young dissidents. This showed the potential of right-wing extremism, which has in the meantime showed its ugly head in the Monday demonstrations in Leipzig even.

The director said he wanted his film to be seen as an "appeal for people to listen to one another, to try and understand one another, for freedom of speech, before it is too late." This is a position which other East German participants in the festival took up, when apprehension was expressed in one of the discussions about the new nationalistic tones of the demonstrations.

There was a lot of discussion at this year's Leipzig Festival, unlike what happened at previous events, when discussion was discouraged.

Previously Russian films were not invited to participate. This year there were many. At the opening performance a Russian film was presented showing judicial terror in the Stalinist era.

Many other witnesses of glasnost and perestroika suffered from being long-winded, a failure of most of the festival contributions. Few placed their confidence in the power of the visual.

An exception to this was Ioris Iven's *Eine Geschichte über den Wind*, this Dutch documentary film-maker's last work before he died. It was given a special showing.

Co-director Marcelline Loridan, Iven's companion, collected an honorary Golden Dove for it.

This was also a gesture to make up for the past. Marceline Loridan was last in Leipzig in 1968 and she could only show her film about the student movement in Europe in secret. Students from Babelsberg who attended the screening of the film were expelled from the film academy.

In past years the productions made by this film college were the most interesting contributions to be seen in Leipzig.

This time round these student contributions were made out-dated by events, as were the films shot over the past few months by the East German film organisation DEFA studios, which were shown and given prizes.

Dilapidation is exposed

What was regarded as particularly courageous just a short while ago is spoken of much more openly in newspapers and on television in the GDR now.

One example was a TV report on the dilapidation of whole districts in Leipzig. This was given a prize by the Leipzig City Council, of all organisations.

The film was entitled *Ist Leipzig noch zu retten?* (Can Leipzig still be saved?) and in view of the expected economies which will be imposed on the arts in the GDR this could be applied to the festival; can the Leipzig Festival be saved?

Guests at the festival were unanimous in the view that the festival, a meeting point for documentary film-makers from all over the world, must carry on.

A film-maker from Frankfurt suggested that in case of emergency cash should be made available from the Federal Republic's film promotion fund.

Heinz Kersten

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 4 December 1989)

Gay life in a prudish land: coming out in East Germany

Frankfurter Allgemeine

It has been a long time since anyone in the German Democratic Republic has been able to say: "I am gay."

Now, when anyone does say this, the individual's confession is submerged by declarations from the masses.

The people on GDR streets are shouting: "We are the people." In this way they are demonstrating a national insurrection against prevailing conditions, which for the present at least allow people to forget entirely that there are still minority problems.

Heiner Carow is an East German film-maker and his film, *Coming Out*, deals with the ticklish theme of homosexuality.

A few weeks ago the film would have attracted more attention in the GDR than it is attracting now, naturally, when everything is in a state of radical change, so that surmounting a single taboo does not count for much.

The events of the past few weeks have not improved particularly the homosexual's lot in the GDR, apart from the general easing of many pressures, which must have meant relief for those who have had to suffer under a system which did not have room for dissidents or people with a different life style.

It is sufficiently well-known that several democratic states still have difficulties in coming to terms with homosexuals.

The central theme presented in Carow's film is: "To be gay and a teacher — do you know what that adds up to?" This is not outdated by the fact that a whole nation is experiencing its own political *coming out*.

The new frankness is not a matter of course by any means. There is homosexuality in the GDR, of course, and even true socialists are not immune from being sexually different from the vast majority of party members.

But in a country such as the GDR, moulded by prudery and smallmindedness, there is total silence about "the love that dare not speak its name."

A book about homosexuality first appeared in the GDR in 1987, published by the "People and Health" publishing organisation, but this was more a scientific publication which only reached insiders, psychologists, doctors and scientists, anyway.

But this year the Aufbau-Verlag published *Ganz normal anders* (Quite normal ((but)) different), providing gays in the GDR with information. It was quickly sold out.

The media have also hesitantly and in a roundabout way dealt with the subject. The weekly arts magazine *Sonntag*, published by the arts association, introduced "Sonntagsklub in Berlin" under the heading "PSF 229," which at first glance did not reveal its unusual qualities.

In the first sentence the reporter asked: "Where are the gay people?" not realising that he was sitting in the middle of them. The gay scene in the GDR is far from being conspicuous. A variety of social pressures make sure of that.

Niels Sönnichsen, the well-known East German Aids expert, declared that the incidence of Aids in the GDR was insignificant, and that homosexuals in the GDR conducted themselves differently to gays in other countries. He said, for instance, that excessive sexual practices were unknown in the GDR.

Carow's film reveals that there is more going on than the "Stinos," as boringly normal citizens are disparagingly called by those who do not see themselves in the same light, believe.

Cameraman Martin Schlesinger has presented an intimate knowledge of the Berlin scene. He has tracked down *hopeless male prostitutes in* East Berlin's Friedrichshain Park, and filmed secluded pubs, the like of which can be found in any large city.

There should be about 800,000 gays in the GDR. They cannot simply vanish from the face of the earth, just because they do not fit into normal society. But they do not make themselves conspicuous.

In this respect their "coming out," a person acknowledging his or her homosexuality, must be as difficult for them as it was for the teacher in the film, Philipp Klarmann, played by Matthias Freihof.

For Philipp his world falls apart literally when he has to admit to himself that he is gay. He is not entirely unprepared for this, but it is still a blow.

He has just moved in with a girlfriend, who is expecting his child — then he meets Matthias, played by Dirk Kummer. The young 19-year-old is much more au fait about things than Philipp, aged 27.

Matthias had early on learned that it was pointless fighting against his nature. Bewildered, Philipp asked him: "Don't you want a family, children?" Matthias replied: "No, because I can't."

Philipp Klarmann goes through hell. He wanders through the city and his life falls to pieces. He looked for his friend, but more, he tried to find himself.

When he does at last find himself, he has lost everything. Suspicions have been aroused in the school, and Philipp now does not bother himself about trying to allay them.

His girlfriend leaves him and on New Year's Eve his friend Matthias has to have his stomach pumped out after having attempted suicide.

The lady doctor asked Martthias: "Why did you do that?" The patient stammered in reply: "I'm gay," as if it were an incurable disease.

Forty copies of the film have been made and it is being shown all over the GDR. It leaves audiences, mostly young people, astounded and speechless. Sometimes they gather in small groups to discuss it, but most of them lack experience of life. In one of the most mov-

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ing, accompanying himself dreadfully on a Hammond organ.

He is still one of the *Liedermacher*, perhaps because he was always an outsider, "easy to bring into solidarity with others but difficult to organise." He never tried to unravel historical events, but he is a sharp observer of the human condition.

Hüsch is writing songs for a concert tour of the Lower Rhine, and is busy on his autobiography, which should appear next May with the title *Du kommst auch drin vor*.

He describes his condition as "capitulated, often resigned, never optimistic, reluctantly confident always." *Liedermacher* are finished, their lyrics have passed into history, and history is being made elsewhere. But a song, produced at lightning speed, is already being broadcast on the radio.

The words are taken from public statements by West Berlin's Mayor Walter Momper and the background choir hums "Berlin, Berlin." That is a political song, 1989 vintage. It would give any guitarist the willies.

Barbara Bückmann

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 2 December 1989)

RESEARCH

Pondering absolutes from the icy wastes of Gondwanaland



On the northernmost tip of the Antarctic peninsula, opposite South America, work will begin during the coming south polar summer on setting up a new West German satellite research station.

Scheduled to become operational in 1991 it will help investigate the ice conditions of the Weddell Sea in much greater detail and on a longer-term basis than before.

A mirror with a diameter of over ten metres will enable the measurement of the movement of the continents — with millimetre precision — by evaluating signals received from quasars on the edge of the cosmos.

The Alfred Wegener Institute of Polar and Oceanographic Research in Bremerhaven, which will run the new station together with the Institute of Applied Geodetics and the German Aerospace Research Institute, will then be able for the first time ever to gather practical evidence for the continental drift theory propounded by Alfred Wegener.

The polar activities carried out both in the north and south pole regions by the Federal Republic of Germany are coordinated by the Alfred Wegener Institute.

As Institute director Gotthilf Hempel, *a marine biologist, points out:*

"In order to become a member of the consultative round of the Antarctic Treaty we began by setting up the Georg von Neumayer station. And we bought an icebreaker, the *Polarstern*, which is probably the most modern ship of its kind."

The Federal Republic of Germany became a consultative member of the Antarctic Treaty in 1981. Since then it has had a full say in all matters relating to the Sixth Continent.

The Antarctic Treaty was signed by twelve nations on 1 December, 1959. Today there are 39 signatory states.

Its objective is to guarantee the peaceful utilisation of the Antarctic and the freedom of scientific research.

One of the main reasons why the Alfred Wegener Institute chose the Weddell Sea as its primary field of activity is that the Weddell Sea, which is covered by pack ice almost all year round, still ranks as a particularly unexplored area of the white continent.

The following are just some of the key areas of research for West German polar researchers in the Weddel Sea research centre within the framework of national and international programmes: the registration of various species, the investigation of the life cycle of the krill, surveys designed to gain a deeper insight into how the Antarctic ecosystem works, research into the structure of the geological substratum with first signs of hydrocarbon traces, and a check of the penguin, seal and whale populations (a noticeable recovery of the whale and seal stocks has been confirmed).

Within the world climate programme the Antarctic plays a special role due to the tremendous processes of energy exchange which take place there between the sea, the ice and the atmosphere.

Data on the resultant local and global consequences is fed into the computer of the Alfred Wegener Institute and processed into specific climatic models.

The hole in the ozone layer discovered above the Antarctic is part of the studies pertaining to the atmospheric and climatological field of activity.

This problem also exists above the north polar regions, but because of the more complicated climatic and chemical processes the colder Antarctic still demonstrates the more typical conditions for this alarming phenomenon.

The research and supply ship *Polarstern* (16,000 tons water displacement) can take up to 41 members of crew and 65 scientists on board.

It has laboratories and equipment for oceanographic, biological, geological, geophysical and other polar and marine studies.

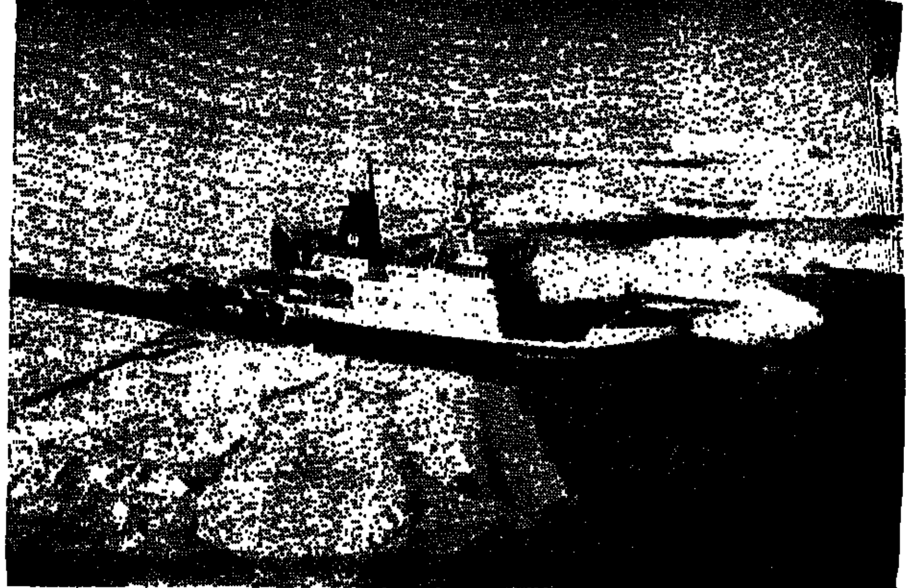
There is also an aerological station for atmospheric radio wave measurements and a board weather chart with satellite imagery equipment.

The *Polarstern* has a central on-board computer for the electronic data processing and an aquarium container in which living animals from the Weddel Sea can be brought back to Bremerhaven.

The ship also has a helicopter on board.

With its 20,000 horsepower the *Polarstern* can plough its way through ice with is one-and-a-half metres thick at a speed of 5.5 knots.

If the pack ice piles up in front of the bow it is simply rammed. Because of its special tasks in the field of Antarctic research the *Polarstern*, which cost DM200m, is particularly important to the Alfred Wegener Institute.


The mail must get through. The *Polarstern* cleaves its way through the Antarctic ice. (Photo: Wasserthal)

Researchers "moved into" the Institute's Georg von Neumayer research station in the northeastern Akta Bay in the south polar summer of 1981.

The station, a tubular steel construction, is now covered by a seven-metre layer of snow. What is more, it has been deformed by the flow movement of the ice.

This is why this station is to be closed in the Antarctic summer of 1991/1992.

The new station, which will no longer be a tubular steel construction but is to be built on extended stilts, will also be located in the Akta Bay.

The Filchner summer station is located roughly 1,500 kilometres to the south of this area on the Filchner-Ronne shelf ice.

It is not always operational and the *Polarstern* or the Dornier polar aircraft of the Alfred Wegener Institute only call in if the need arises.

This station, which can be raised hydraulically as the snow covering increases, is located on the second largest Antarctic ice shelf.

It serves as a base for geological and geophysical expeditions to adjoining areas.

During the first Antarctic expedition by the *Polarstern* in October 1986 the mobile Drescher station was officially opened in the eastern Weddel Sea.

It has two small residential and research buildings for up to eight persons and concentrates on biological and meteorological observation.

The programme this polar summer includes research on the nearby colonies of emperor penguins and Weddell seals.

A fourth West German research station is the Gondwana station on an ice-free promontory of the Ross Sea. It is a dependence of the Hanover-based Federal Institute of Geosciences and Raw Materials.

It was officially opened by expedition leader Dr Franz Tessensohn and his team in 1983 on the occasion of the third German North Victoria Land expedition.

Gondwanaland was also the name of the hypothetical southern continental mass of the late Palaeozoic and Mesozoic eras introduced to the scientific discussion by Alfred Wegener in 1910.

Antarctica was claimed to have been the core of this primeval continent and connected to South America, Africa, Australia and India.

This station is above all the point of departure for geological and geophysical excursions.

The aerogeophysical measurements made during the 1984/85 GANOVEX IV expedition were among its main achievements.

The researchers from the Hanover institute also made use of the polar aircraft and helicopters the Bonn Research and Technology Minister made available to the Alfred Wegener Institute in his capacity as overall patron of West German polar research.

Scientists at the Federal Institute of Geosciences and Raw Materials already declared at that time that the Antarctic would be a problematic region as the earth's last treasure chamber.

The Sixth Continent, which is almost twice the size of Australia, is buried beneath a layer of ice which is up to 4,500 metres thick.

Even if useful finds are made completely new techniques would have to be developed to extract and transport the material.

Peter Raabe

(Der Tagesspiegel, Berlin, 2 December 1989)

MODERN LIVING

Giving handicapped people the chance to lead their lives independently

Physically and mentally handicapped people can lead independent lives — if they are given the chance. Sigrid Arnade reports for *Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt*.



In a service house, all residents have their own self-contained flat: "They can decide themselves how to spend their day. This means real independence. Life in a service house is a genuine alternative to living in a home."

This is how Wolfgang Seibert, who is physically handicapped and has to rely on his electric wheelchair and outside help to cope with many daily chores, describes the advantages of life in a "service house."

No longer having to live in a special home is the priority goal of the "Independent Living" movement.

The movement wants disabled people to be able to decide for themselves how to shape their lives.

Independent living means "having control over one's own life. This presupposes the ability to choose between acceptable alternatives. And it means reducing the degree of dependence on the decisions of others in everyday life."

This is the abstract definition of the American Independent Living movement which serves as a guideline for its German supporters.

Living in a service house, which is constructed to meet the needs of the disabled, is an *acceptable alternative*.

The refuse bins, for example, are placed in such a way that people in wheelchairs have got enough room to move around between them; letter boxes, door peepholes and doorbells are installed a level which can be reached by the disabled; the main entrance door to the house opens automatically; and there is a mirror facing people in wheelchairs in lifts so that they can wheel themselves out backwards.

The 24 residential units in the service house have an area of between 60 and 120 square metres. Wolfgang Siebert is one of the residents.

He can "park" his electric wheelchair in a special garage next to the entrance door.

The tenant's personal wishes are taken into account when dividing up the rooms.

They can remove or erect partitions, decide how the kitchen should be arranged and say where they feel the special handrails should be installed in the bathroom.

Not only physically handicapped people can lead an independent life but also the mentally retarded.

Like Gerda Böhme, for example, who has lived together with seven other residents in an external group of residential units run by the Lebenshilfe Bonn-Beuel care organisation since the beginning of 1989.

Before this Gerda Böhme lived in a home. She was prepared for life in the external residential group during two years of special training. She learned to cook, wash and do her own shopping.

"I have the feeling that I'm a proper 'grown-up' now because I have more freedom and can decide for myself what to do," she says, describing her new life.

She enjoys organising her time independently; deciding when to do the cleaning, washing or ironing and when to go to bed in the evening.

Motivated by her success so far Gerda Böhme has set herself new goals for the future:

"I want to become even more independent, then I might be able to live in a smaller group or on my own later on."

Living independently is not the same as living self-reliantly. A physically handicapped person who is totally reliant on outside help can nevertheless lead an independent life; provided that is this person receives the necessary back-up support.

This "personal assistance" includes personal hygiene, domestic help, medical care and communicative aid.

In the service house in which Wolfgang Siebert lives a care plan is tailored to the specific needs of individual residents.

The burden of care services is shouldered by a variety of institutions and helpers, such as the official public external services (such as the *Sozialstationen*) or the neighbourly help provided in an honorary capacity.

Three "house helps", students and two people doing community service (an alternative to military service in the Federal Republic of Germany) live in the service house.

At least one of them can be contacted round the clock, if need by via an emergency call system. This is either triggered by a cord behind the toilet or a small manual transmitter.

A service house is particularly well-suited for physically handicapped people. The mentally handicapped rarely need special architectural alterations, but they also need personal assistance.

In the external residential group in Bonn two full-time "wardens" look after the eight residents.

Gerda Böhme feels that it is a good thing that there is no warden in the house at night. She is also pleased that they have more time.

This was confirmed by one of the wardens. Because the residents of the external group have become more independent the wardens have more time to concentrate on improving the abilities of individual residents.

There are different approaches, therefore, to enabling handicapped persons to live an independent life. There is still no general agreement among experts whether the type and seriousness of the disability rules out an independent life for some people.

Handicapped people who opt for the new approach find themselves confronted by numerous obstacles and problems.

There are not enough residential complexes such as service houses (of which there are only about a dozen in the Federal Republic of Germany) or flat-sharing groups with the necessary care services.

In many cases there is a lack of the personal assistance needed to enable handicapped people to go on living within their own four walls.

There is never enough money and the type of disability itself can restrict the scope of independence.

At a different level many non-handicapped people also have to face restrictions to their independence rooted in social conditions.

In view of the housing shortage and high rents, for example, many people are unable to decide freely where they want to live.

In the case of the handicapped the problems "simply" become clearer because of their special quality and quantity.

Another barrier to living independently, one with which many non-handicapped people are undoubtedly also familiar, is the fear of each individual to try out something new.

Lothar Sandfort from the Centre for Independent Living in Cologne points out that many handicapped people react to independent living concepts by saying "I can't manage that."

Sandfort explains that improved structures alone are not enough to break up existing dependencies.

The persons affected must themselves learn to accept their abilities as well as their limitations and to develop greater self-confidence.

A push-and-shove society's limits

This is the only way to voice demands credibly, since "the importance attached to us by society is not the importance we could and must have."

Sandfort blames this on the "push-and-shove" society in the Federal Republic of Germany, in which all that counts is profitability.

He claims that the sense of solidarity with fellow human beings is not as pronounced as in the Scandinavian countries.

In Denmark, for example, attempts are not only made to provide adequate care for the handicapped and the elderly, but also to give them a maximum quality of life.

The law in Denmark demands that 20 per cent of all rented accommodation is built in such a way that handicapped people can live in it.

During the medical aids exhibition "Reha 89" a Danish firm exhibited a detached family house which had no steps or thresholds and which had wide sliding doors.

This means that the occupants can remain in their familiar surroundings even if they become physically handicapped.

In this eventuality an emergency call system is installed and the respective community provides the necessary personal assistance.

In some countries independent living for handicapped people is already a reality.

To make this possible in the Federal Republic of Germany Lothar Sandfort calls upon the handicapped themselves to form a more powerful lobby by organising their protest.

Sigrid Arnade

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, Hamburg, 1 December 1989)

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cries by pointing out that he did not go to the West voluntarily.

He did not mention that he had spent the previous night in West Berlin, because "the beds there are better."

Many audience members criticised him, asking what point there was of being a *Liedermacher* when he did not understand the people.

Biermann became well-known and popular in the GDR when the SED leadership refused to let him return from a concert tour. The tour of the Federal Republic in November 1976 was supposed to take ten days, but it lasted 13 years.

Biermann emotionally told his story in the Leipzig Fair hall. It was like a tale out of *One Thousand and One Nights* for the young people between 20 and 30. This is how one nurse described it any way.

Many wanted to see Biermann the legend who had participated in introducing democratic change into the GDR 20 years ago. But only the aged Biermann's hit "Ermutigung" is well-known. This ballad is sung by prisoners in GDR prisons today.

A GDR teacher hummed the tune as Biermann sang. At the end he said: "The revolutionary young people of today have no feel for poetry."

His wife added: "I admire Biermann. It took a lot more courage then to revolt against the state than it does to slouch anonymously through the city today."

Ingomar Schwelz/Joachim Schöttes

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 4 December 1989)

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ing scenes in the film, an ageing homosexual tells the despairing Philipp that in Nazi concentration camps homosexuals had to wear the notorious pink triangle on their sleeve. This mark of Cain had deeply humiliated him, the old man said.

Even if marks of this kind are no longer to be seen and the famous anti-homosexuality Paragraph 175 in the Criminal Code has been abolished in the GDR, this film shows just how far society shuns people who "come out," people who are different from the others.

Explaining the thrust of the film Carow said that eight years ago he could not have done what he wanted.

Carow is currently vice-president of the Academy for the Arts in the GDR. He has been bitten once and so is twice shy as a film-maker. Many of his projects have never been filmed. His film *Die Russen kommen*, made in 1968, was not shown until 1987. His *Legende von Paul und Paula*, made in 1972, was fiercely attacked. Now, when times are easier, he is getting pressure from another quarter.

At the première of *Coming Out*, the day when overnight the GDR frontiers were opened and barriers to the outside world fell, Carow said that when people went out on the streets in masses, got together voluntarily to clarify problems, "this was a challenge of considerable magnitude for the film. This is the main problem for me, which we film-makers have to address. You must now shoot films, which have a similar impetus, films which ask questions and disturb people." As a first attempt, Heiner Carow seems to have been successful.

Monika Zimmermann

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 1 December 1989)

HORIZONS

Shock revelation about young computer fans: they're the same as other children

The question is often asked whether children can become addicted to computers. A recent study has shown that contrary to popular prejudice there is little difference between young computer fans and other children of the same age who are indifferent to computers.

No fuss is made about small children using knives, forks, scissors or matches and, in keeping with the times, computers as well.

But a common view is that playing about with computers makes children vague and ill. Computer games destroy the imagination and stimulate brutal attitudes.

It is believed that children affected by *the addiction let their social contacts* atrophy and tend to be loners. Eventually computer fanatics turn their backs on the world and make the computer their closest friend.

These are just a few of the comments brought up in discussions about computers and children.

Just what such judgments are based on is not clear. Educational experts quote "American surveys," but it is obvious that they rarely ask how far these studies can be related to other conditions.

Journalists prefer their own observations of the pitiful victims of computer addiction who, they claim, they have found in the computer departments of large stores.

There have been no empirical investigations of the problem in the Federal Republic until recently. This deficiency has permitted wild speculation and made it easy to pass off anxieties as if they were facts. It is a facet of our times that anything technical causes fear.

That should now all change. The discussions about children and computers have been going on for seven years, and communications scientists from the institute for empirical literature and media research, attached to Siegen University, published the first nationwide study of computer kids this summer. This study replaces suppositions with hard facts.

The institute's researchers sent out a detailed questionnaire to teachers in 1,500 schools in North Rhine-Westphalia between 1986 and 1988. At least 30 per cent of the teachers approached supplied useful replies, providing the sociologists with information on more than 100,000 pupils.

From this extensive material no evidence was found for the bad effect of home computers on children and adolescents. There was equally no evidence for the supporters of computer science who claim that an introduction to computers had a considerable educational value.

There were three basic points to emerge from the Siegen institute study:

1. Teachers believe there is no connection between an interest in computers and particular aspects of character or behaviour. It can happen, for instance, that certain ambitions to acquire a knowledge of computer language or learn how to remove computer memory safety mechanisms can use up a lot of a pupils' time. Children then withdraw into themselves until they come to grips with it, or they break off their attempts in frustration. In any case they soon get back to being their old selves again.

2. There are just as many shy and reserved pupils among the computer fans as there are extroverts. There is no clear preference here. Most of the young people interested in computers were described as friendly, ready to work as a team and prepared to be helpful: a mic-lined to push themselves forward with their knowledge. Being able to handle a computer can be just as good for prestige within a class as being good at sport, and some pupils know how to exploit this fact.

Operating a computer is quite an ordinary hobby for most young people, who concern themselves with computers in the long-term. If they no longer are interested in things and social contacts they used to be interested in this is no different from their reactions to other newly-discovered interests. Poor school performance due to computer obsessions is rare and in any case is no more lasting than the effects of the first great love affair.

There were few pupils, who worked with computers permanently and intensively and so come up to the image of the computer fanatics named by the media as "computer kids". Pupils who are totally wrapped up in computers, computer-game freaks, 14-year-old programmers, lads with thick glasses and two left hands, who are preparing for later studies in computer-science, are rare in schools, if they turn up at all.

The researchers in Siegen could not confirm in any way the much-talked off effects of computers on pupils. Nor were there any differences in attitudes to computers between boys and girls.

All in all the reseachers could find little difference between pupils who played around with computers from those who were indifferent to them.

In fact the scientists could see no point in continuing with their research and an indepth study planned was abandoned.

How could the proven effects on young people of getting involved with computers be so divergent from public assessments of the effects? And does it follow that what the researchers found to be true for the years between 1986 and 1988 will be true for the future?

The poor reputation home computers have among educationalists is based to a large extent on the fact that, like television, they include a screen.

Indeed the video screen contribution to blurring the differences between electronic pictures and reality has been considerable and is disturbing enough. But it is quite arbitrary to fasten ideas on this development to a technical detail such as a screen.

Even if the computer only serves as a game and is undervalued for this, that which flickers across the screen is far less pleasing and less entertaining than what appears on television.

Computer games, regarded as being so fantastic, have such unattractive contents that it is hard to image that a 13-year-old, half awake to the world, wants to spend more than a couple of afternoons playing with them.

Admittedly computers can have great appeal. The computer confronts young people with considerable intellectual challenges. Sooner or later they solve the problems or eventually regard them as not worth bothering with. Experiences of this sort dim the computer's appeal.

There is also little evidence of the loneliness, feared and widely assumed, experienced in front of the screen.

The world of the hackers with programme swapping and computer communication by telephone have all created new social structures, and probably there are more contacts between computer fans than the notorious solitariness of the reading habit.

The decision of the reseachers in Siegen to halt their work on the effects of computers because there seems no scientific problem to be addressed is logical, at least as far as can be seen from the present situation. Nevertheless there are many parents and teachers who have an uneasy feeling.

They have no idea what the kids are doing with computers, and ask themselves uneasily what the computers are doing to their children.

Certainly it is too early to be causing general alarm. Nowhere else is technical progress and its incorporation into production so swift as in electronics.

Over the next two or three years *there* will be developments in *technology* which could make what happens on the computer screen as attractive and influential as has been reserved to videos until now.

The computer industry's immediate aims are the interaction with videos with the possibilities of taking part in the action in a film which is *running* on the screen.

Some outlandish developments

Optical storage disks with enormous storing capacities and high-performance graphic processors offer the means for this, and they are constantly getting less expensive.

The long-term aim of technicians in the field is to head for overcoming the separation of what passes before and behind the screen.

Some outlandish things are being developed: special glasses with minimonitors for each eye to jolt the obserer into the picture.

Sensors, hundreds of them accommodated in a glove, pick up the movements of the hand's muscular system and transfer them to the computer, where a ghost hand is moved according to the will of its master. The feelers report back to the person the detection of pressure and weight from the fantom world.

Some of these developments, which are being tested by scientists at US air force research institutes and nuclear research laboratories, will find their way into hobby shops and the toy departments of department stores faster than the Siegen researchers dare dream of.

Perhaps the path from computer into the brain via the physical perceptiomn system of the body is a more arduous detour which other technologies are making superfluous.

Mind machines are difficult to find in Europe. In America they are already obtainable from the corner electronics shop. They are a kind of computer-controlled, reversed encephalograph, which produces hallucinatory and drug effects without screen or tricks, which have a direct effect on the brain.

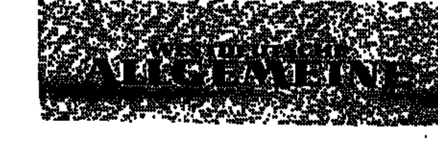
For those who want to there are the possibilities of making themselves into an appendage of a programmed computer.

Not that this implies that the exit of whole generations into the electronic world is imminent and warnings should be issued. But the very dangers, which until now have been the basis of unfounded discussion could be imminent.

Michael Charlier

(Deutsche Allgemeine Sonntagsblatt, Hamburg, 1 December 1989)

Pupils learn to live and work in a world of bits in space



State education ministers have decided that, from the age of 14, children should learn how to work with computers.

The new school subject will be called "the basic course in information and communications technology."

The first text book, *Mit dem Computer leben*, has already appeared. It was prepared by two scientists from Dortmund University, Dr Rolf von Lüde and Professor Hans-Günter Rolff.

Children will not learn programme language but will be taught some of the various applications of computers.

They will be picked up by a space cruiser which they must guide safely through two meteorite storms to bring an important consignment of medicines to the parent ship.

If they achieve this they can construct a space ship themselves and raise the veil which enshrouds technology.

With the simplest German commands they can work out how much Kathrin must really pay for a moped for which she has been given a credit of DM3,000; or they make a computer screen search for a certain pupil or they can produce a school newspaper.

They can also see what can be done to avoid traffic chaos on a Saturday when shops are open all day.

In the computer simulator they sit in the central computer of the parking control system in the Town Hall and control the indicator boards.

Dr von Lüde said: "Here the children are up against the limits of technology. At long last a person can decide whether he should drive to the free parking area or queue up for an empty parking place on the road."

Julia Beuerlein

(Westdeutsche Allgemeine, Essen, 17 November 1989)

CRIME

As Europe prepares to lower its internal frontiers...

The advent of Europe 1992 and the vision of a borderless Europe is not making law enforcers happy. They say new strategies will be needed to combat organised crime.

Police are caught between two stools: on one side, people want greater freedom; on the other, organised crime is on the increase. It is therefore understandable that police chiefs and *Land* and national interior ministers tend to keep the foot hovering over the brakes.

But the question is: is that the right approach? Or is it much more a question of changing the practices of international cooperation. On 14 July 1985, the three Benelux countries plus France and Germany signed the Schengen Agreement, named after the town in Luxembourg it was signed in. Its aim was to end personal controls at common borders by 1 January 1990. In compensation, it was agreed to make its easier for the laws of the respective lands to operate internationally; and to develop more effective electronic investigation systems; and to increase police cooperation.

Soon, opposition to the agreement surfaced, at first internally and then publicly. The main target of the critics is the liberal Dutch attitude to so-called soft drugs and also against the equally liberal attitude of the French towards ownership of firearms.

Also, the solution of problems of pursuit are regarded by those who have to do the pursuing as a joke — and they are right. Because it is envisaged that investigators will have the right to make arrests only up to 10 kilometres inside the territory of neighbouring territories. That means the old skat (a game of cards) truism takes on a new validity: the quickest wins.

In these circumstances, it will not be too surprising if the German *Land* interior ministers decide at their conference to put the agreement on the back burner until the other compensation mechanisms are actually in place. Bonn Interior Minister Wolfgang Schäuble: "In an age where criminality is on the increase, we cannot afford a decline in security."

Heinrich Meyer, head of the police union in Baden-Württemberg, takes the view that West Germany must take a fundamental interest is measures under the agreement because "this country's better infrastructure, its liberal image, its central location and stable currency make it a magnet for international criminals."

Reasons of politics, especially concerning economic questions, had led to some basic decisions that were not so advisable. "Out-and-out European politicians allow themselves to be driven by visions of a united Europe and will not accept any objections." The risks were only seen by a few.

Lothar Späth, as Premier of Baden-Württemberg the head of the *Land* which lies no longer in the south-west of Germany but in the centre of Europe, does not go quite so far. He appeals for the creation of a European investigation union and increased controls at external frontiers of the European Community.

It doesn't matter what arguments are used, total abolition of internal Community frontiers is not likely to happen, at least not yet.

But is that really necessary? Reference is happily made to investigation successes against drugs criminals at frontiers. Gosbert Müller, is a senior official in the Baden-Württemberg interior ministry, says that last year, customs officials, border police and *Land* police made 103,000 arrests. Of those, 6,518 were to do with drugs; 5,417 of the drug-related arrests were at internal European Community borders — including 4,463 at the border with the Netherlands. In addition, 41 kilos of heroin, 17 kilos of cocaine, 27 kilos of amphetamines and 828 kilos of cannabis products were confiscated.

What seems at first glance to be impressive turns out to be somewhat less successful. Alone the spectacular success of the police in the battle against the drugs trade this year through international cooperation has been much more effective. In January, 113 kilos of heroin were confiscated in Aachen; a total of 117 kilos was found in an operation in both Hockenheim and Amsterdam. In August 650 kilos of cocaine was confiscated in Munich; and in October, Baden-Württemberg *Land* police found 75 kilos of the purest heroin and discovered a new variation of "the Balkans Route." In none of these cases could border controls help.

Questions about efficiency at borders must be asked. Frieder Birzele is the deputy head of the Social Democrat faction in the Baden-Württemberg assembly. He raises strong queries about the filter function of border checks and says the arrests tend to pick up those at the bottom end of the crime scale. For him, only economic controls at borders make sense — the *Land* is economically extremely active compared with others in Germany. If economic controls were done away with, that would be a loss, he says. But organised crime, he maintains, operates totally independent of any frontier filtering.

That view is confirmed by Rainer Schmitt-Nothen, of the Wiesbaden BKA (criminal police organisation, equivalent to the CID or FBI), who says that only three of every 100 people are



checked at European Community internal borders. These numbers speak for themselves. Max Bruetsch, a senior Swiss police officer, admitted that border checks netted no big-time criminals. So that is how it seems in spite of any *deterrent effect some border checkpoints might have.*

Police are naturally not challenging the political and economic chances offered by European union such as the stabilisation of security in Europe outside the Community, economic competitiveness in relation to other large economic blocs and, last but not least, the stabilisation of internal security in the framework of a security policy formed by agreement by the whole of Europe. But senior policemen say that this all needs time, much more time than those responsible for the Schengen Agreement admit they are prepared to allow.

Alfred Stümper, *Land* police chief, says the risks with crime are still too big for any European latitude to be allowed.

Border police protest at French-German frontier. The sign says: Freedom of Movement for Free People but not for Crooks. (Photo: dpa)

There were differences in the law from country to country. In France, for example, stolen goods could be sold on to "customers acting in good faith" who don't know the origin of the goods. This did not apply in West Germany. This was an invitation for a thief to go to France to get rid of booty stolen in Germany.

That is of course mere bagatelle compared with the extent of organised criminality. Stümper says that, through the increased internationalisation of all areas of life, so have the various fields of operations in criminality broadened. He thinks that rich harvests are to be had by criminals with the opening up of borders in the fields of legal system, economic systems, finance and social systems, specifically paving the way for operations in money laundering, theft of know-how, tax fraud and medical supplies.

Rapid advances in technology helped the criminal, especially in economic crime. Completely new fields of opera*tion had opened up; for example in the* area of computers. Modern photocopiers made it possible for better and easier forging than ever.

Stümper says all this is opening up a gap between the chances for big-time criminality and the efforts of security forces to match it. And an evermore-sensitive society was creating more and more hurdles which hindered police operations, data protection provisions, for example.

Then there were more hurdles caused for investigators by an ever-more-sensitive public — in data protection, for instance. He said it was estimated that turnover in drug crime world-wide at more than 900 billion dollars a year. He said that where there was money, there was also power; and soon there would be political power. The situation prevailing in Colombia where efforts were being made to at least contain the influence of the drugs cartels, confirmed this.

Stümper's approach in Europe would be to use the "security philosophy of tightened controls at external frontiers." This would presuppose, however, a comprehensive information system dealing with both people and facts. This was a requirement of the Schengen Agreement but did not yet exist. And it is precisely here that the police must be prepared to make changes and forget about national issues. Schmitt-Nothen calls for a single language of communication. He says that because computer language is English, then English should be that language. But it wouldn't be possible to persuade the French of this, never mind the smaller and no less self confident smaller Community nations. The Babylonian mixture of tongues was not only continuing to exist; it was increasing with the addition of new members.

Stümper has three sets of proposals he says are essential for taking organised crime head on. 1. Organising police investigations on a conspirative basis. Many steps, including use of undercover agents, phone tapping, establishment of phoney firms and arrangements for a super-grass system. 2. Hitting offenders where it hurts — in the pocket — through confiscation of profits and control of larger cash transactions. 3. Comprehensive improvement in information and communication systems.

But Stümper is not optimistic that these steps can be pushed through in Germany because they touch on some sensitive areas. Similar conclusions are reached by (television journalist) Dagobert Lindlau in his book, *The Mob*, in which he gave a decisive push to public discussion of organised crime. He mentions under-cover investigation, protec*tion for witnesses and confiscation of* criminal profits and says the introduction of such measure would have first to overcome overwhelming public resistance.

In 1988 there were about 700 drug deaths; this year a projected 1,000; next year still more. The drug cartels campaign into Europe is not beginning to roll, it is rolling. The meeting of interior ministers described the situation as "dramatic."

The entire spectrum of organised crime inside the next 10 to 20 years, agree the BKA in Wiesbaden and the Stuttgart criminal police, will over-run the entire country. Stümper: "The development of criminality and the far-reaching solidifying of its structure in South American countries and in the past few years in the big cities of North America *should serve* as a clear warning signal."

Although he is correct, the dated sys*tem of border controls are not the way* to take the challenge on, at least not in the form they are used today. They only give the holidaymaker a fright. What is needed is much better cooperation across national and European Community borders and beyond. Drug cartels are not fought on the Dutch-German border but on the long route from Colombia or from the infamous Golden Triangle of Thailand and Burma.

And police work that is not supported by the political will to help developing countries is bound to fail. The latest successes against the drug trade demonstrates that this approach is not only the right one but also the only one possible.

Hans-Dieter Filser

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